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CHRISTIAN BAPTISM,

THE BAPTISM OF CHRISTIANS:

OR,

PRIMITIVE, APOSTOLIC BAPTISM,

THE IMMERSION OF BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST,

INTO THE NAME

OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.

BY

P. W. GRANT.

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PREFACE.

My aim in issuing this work on Baptism has not been to write what might be deemed likely to commend the doctrine to the speculative opinion of many, but rather by as careful and as exact an interpretation as I am able to give of the most important passages of Scripture bearing on the subject, to set the actual truth, with all the authority of Bible testimony, before the hearts and minds of those who may desire to know the mind of God on the matter.

I may say that I had long entertained and upheld views of a different character, and had a very devoted attachment to the denomination in which I had been brought up, and was far from desiring any change.

In the course of pastoral duty, however, I was again and again led to inquire more exactly into Bible-teaching on the subject. By-and-by, I came to see that, in one or two passages, the Baptists held the true view. One of my own congregation having said that he had been so much perplexed with the controversy as to feel himself in danger of losing his religion alto-

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gether, I began more fully to realise the vast importance of exact views on the subject.

I deemed that the only effective way of ascertaining the truth was by rightly interpreting the whole scope of Scripture upon it—Old Testament as well as New. In the course of exposition, I had soon to acknowledge first of one portion of Scripture, and then of another, that the Baptists had the advantage. Yet at that time it never occurred to me that I was really likely to have to alter my general position.

An invitation to a larger sphere of labour about that time aroused afresh, and more decidedly than ever, the question of Baptism. I felt it would be neither wise nor good to part with my present flock and become united to another of the same order, and then to be obliged to unite with a third, differing from both on this one point of Baptism. I was led, therefore, to study more decisively my position in relation to the subject. I went over every passage of Scripture in any way involving what seemed a principle, or expressly stating a practice, relating to infant baptism. I carefully studied every statement of Scripture from end to end, and could now find none which I could regard as a warrant for infant baptism.

Further consulting two special works on the subject, I found that the author of the one had been led to treat of the Abrahamic covenant as I had now been led to view it. The author of the other failed now to convince me as he had done in earlier times. I lost

what I had previously regarded as sufficient Bible authority for infant baptism, and was driven to the conclusion that without a command, direct or indirect, of Christ, I could no longer baptise an infant, and, almost at once, I felt it desirable to resign my charge. In doing this, I said truly and sincerely, "As I before esteemed the minority of Baptists in our united Church as highly as the Pædobaptist majority, I now esteem the majority with whom I differ as highly as the minority with whom I now agree."

I was aware that I originally received the invitation to become their pastor as my views were in harmony with those of the majority, and I therefore resolved upon my resignation, so as not to disturb their harmony and peace as a Church.

I am as sincerely attached to my old flock as ever, and with all my heart I wish them every blessing individually, and all prosperity as a Church; and, so far as I have ever seen, our unity of spirit in the bond of love and peace has remained unbroken, and I trust it will do so without decay, and without end.

INVERAVEN BANK, PERTH, 1st January, 1900.



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CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION. .

"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All power hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth: Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations; baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—MATTHEW XXVIII. 18-20.

How mighty and far-reaching these words of the risen Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, intended and fitted for all ages and nations of the world! What a contrast they suggest between the shame and powerlessness of the Cross and the power and glory of the Resurrection! How awful the darkness! How glorious the light! The most wonderful life seemed an absolute failure. Now it is proved to have been an unparalleled success. What a contrast between the awful cry of the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and the calm, sublime words of the Commission, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth; Go ye

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therefore, . . . and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"

Let us consider them.

They suggest three things:-

I. The Rightful Claim of Christ: "All power," &c.

II. The great Commission of Christ: "Go ye therefore," &c.; and

III. The Faithful Contract of Christ: "And lo, I am with you," &c.

I.—The Claim of Christ.

"All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth."

Ist. All authority in heaven and on earth. The risen Saviour claims to be the universal king. All creatures are to be under His control. All resources are to be at His command. He claims to be the Son of God and the Heir of all things. Still all is given to Him as a Mediatorial King—the Second Adam and the True Head of the human family. He has a redemptive right to the persons and hearts of all. It is no arbitrary gift of the Father. We may reverently say, It is the right of conquest—conquest by self-sacrifice, conquest by blood, conquest acknowledged by all who know His grace, conquest celebrated by the song of the redeemed in heaven and earth, "Unto Him who loved us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood," &c.

2nd. All power in heaven and on earth. Authority without power may soon come to nought. Right must be accompanied with might. Here He speaks as no mere man, however true and good, but as when He said, "I and My Father are one."

3rd. All those gracious influences and spiritual powers, which can come down from heaven, and which may be needed on earth for the salvation of the world, especially the all-embracing power of the Holy Spirit, by whom the Gospel is wielded as "the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth."

II.—The Commission of Christ.

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples," &c.

1st. "Go ye, because I have all the rights and powers, the influences and resources of which I speak." The "therefore" is assuredly here appropriate, whether genuine or not. "Make disciples of all the nations;" seek the salvation of the entire race.

2nd. But who are thus commissioned? Of course, in the first instance, the apostles whom He had previously commissioned to preach the Gospel in their own country, and, we may add, all others in like manner previously sent. Though the eleven are alone expressly said to have been present, not unlikely the 500 witnesses of the resurrection of whom Paul speaks, may have been present also. This gathering was by express appointment; and we are told in this very chapter, verse 10, that Jesus gave a wider invitation to more than the eleven, "go tell My brethren," not My apostles, "that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." Their presence would the better account for the doubts of some, as here recorded. Be this as it may, the future history clearly indicates the extent of the commission. The apostles, doubtless, gave right instructions, and we are told of how those, whom persecution "scattered abroad," "went every-

where preaching the Word." But the real commission is afterwards given, and that, from His Heavenly Throne, and in terms which cannot be misunderstood, "The Spirit and the Bride"—the Holy Spirit and the Church, the whole Church—"say, come; and he that heareth, let him say, come." Here the great Bishop of bishops ordains to the preaching of that Gospel by which men are invited and encouraged to come to Christ for salvation, every man who has heard and welcomed the Word of Life, to proclaim the same to all whom he can induce to hear. But this is not all. We may say, without fear of intelligent contradiction, that this grand commission is written by the finger of the Holy Spirit on the heart and mind of every one whom He has taught the value of his own soul, and the freeness of the salvation of God to every human being. The only wonder is, that the universality of this command of the Great Captain of our salvation should have been so long, so widely, and so ignominiously overlooked, and so cruelly and wickedly neglected and disobeyed by the professing army of the saved. We are far from suggesting that men have not been wisely and from the first set apart for the express purpose of preaching, teaching, and ruling, or that the army ought not to be officered by the most able, courageous, and devoted men. We mean simply to say, that the work and the fighting ought not to be, as it has been, to a vast and sadly ruinous extent, confined to the officers, but required of every soldier of the Cross, as if indeed the Great King commanded and expected every one without exception to do his duty. Officialism has long perverted and paralysed the millions of the heavenly host, and so left the world very far from being conquered to Jesus Christ. In this glorious commission every disciple ought to hear the commanding voice of the Divine Master, "Go and make disciples of all the nations, and never cease till the whole world has been enlightened and saved." How sublime a command! How grand a work! How glorious a conquest! How worthy the mediatorial king and kingdom of the infinite and eternal God!

3rd. The work to be done. We have already referred to that of converting the world to Christ. This is the real and glorious end to be sought. It might well be made the subject of many a discourse. It can never be presented too fully or too forcibly to the minds and hearts of Christians. However, we do not mean to deal largely with it at this time or in this place. We propose to consider the distinctive three-fold aspect in which our Risen Lord has been pleased to put it for the perpetual instruction of all His disciples:—

First, "Make disciples of all the nations;" secondly, "Baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost;" and thirdly, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." Here we shall make no further reference to this threefold commission, as we propose to deal with it somewhat largely and almost exclusively in our exposition of these mighty words of

Jesus Christ.

III.—The Contract of Christ.

"And lo, I am with you," &c.

1st. We have called it a contract, though it is such

and vastly more. It is a most cheering revelation of the very heart of Jesus. Whilst they seek the salvation of the world. He could not but be with them. Wherever, at His command His soldiers go forth to fight, He cannot fail to be at their head, and that, as He is elsewhere represented, "conquering and to conquer." The implied promise or engagement is great and precious, yet not in every sense absolute or unconditional. No one Christian, or Christian Church, or union of Churches, can be thus assured of continued life and prosperity, or even of continued existence, on the mere ground of this true and faithful promise however faithless or unworthy they may be or may become. Most assuredly, the words imply, and it is implied throughout the Scriptures, that the kingdom of Christ cannot fail or be overthrown. But it is nowhere declared any one portion of the Christian Church, however great or however old, is beyond the possibility of faithlessness, and thus of utter extinction. The Church of God cannot perish. "The Highest Himself shall establish her." But, woe to the faithless! "The candlestick will be removed." So the Israelites could not fail to possess the promised land; yet one generation perished in the wilderness and another had to suffer the captivity of Babylon. The like has been more or less sadly experienced in the many ages of the past. Terrible are the corruptions throughout the oldest and most numerous Churches, which take this promise as an infallible guarantee of their certain existence, and yet which must either come back to the simple truth as it is in Jesus, or infer the very opposite. even their own certain destruction. Hence,

2nd. We may note one or two conditions of the

enjoyment of the presence here promised and the presentity then to be anticipated:—

- (1.) True, loyal and devoted love to Christ must be maintained. First love must not be lost either in the heart of the individual disciple or in the hearts of any Christian community. Such love had been left by the Church of Ephesus; and the Head of the Church declared that there must be thorough repentance or the candlestick would be removed, and that doubtless for ever.
- (2.) The glorious Gospel, the Truth as it is in Jesus, must be retained. As the presence of Christ implies and secures continued life and health, the absence of Christ leads as certainly to death and destruction.
- (3.) It is the sacred duty of all the members of professedly Christian Churches to bring all these Churches "to the Law and to the Testimony," that is, to the test of Scripture, and thus to the proof as to whether they are of really New Testament character and so form the true Apostolic succession. All errors must be abandoned. All New Testament principles must be restored. All Churches must be renewed and rendered really Apostolic and Christian. All people must act in keeping with the mind and will, the truths and commandments of Christ. Then shall the Church everywhere enjoy the presence here promised, and all the prosperity, the strength and stability, sure to follow.

SECTION II.

THREE DISTINCT REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMISSION.

I.—The Discipling of all the Nations.

"Make disciples of all the Nations."

1st. The grand idea thus expressed no one ought to be at a loss to know—yet the most varied views have been entertained; and a vast amount of controversy has accordingly followed. For ages the Authorised Version of the New Testament has presented to the popular mind a very different rendering-"go and teach all nations"—which has now been rightly abandoned by all the learned, for the more correct and expressive one given above. In the third clause—"teaching them to observe"-all is exact and suitable. The Greek words are different, and refer to two distinct things; the one to the work of so leading men to Christ that they shall receive Him to be their Saviour and Lord, and to give themselves to Him as His "purchased possession," and freely and unreservedly devoted people; and the other to the work of instructing those thus made and baptised disciples with respect to the whole subsequent course and obligations of the Christian Life. This distinction should be clearly drawn and fully kept in view by all who would understand this commission itself, or form a right conception of the New Testament delineation of the Church or Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

2nd. Here we must consider more fully and carefully the real import of the implied expressive name, "a disciple of Jesus Christ." Till we do so, we cannot really know what is meant by "discipling" or "making disciples of all the nations," in fact, we cannot understand the nature of the commission itself. In so doing, we must resort to the study of no mere classical Greek or ordinary usage of the language, but of the peculiar, we might say the perfectly unique, usage of the New Testament, or of Christ Himself and His Apostles. We are accustomed from our earliest days to hear that "disciple" means simply "scholar." Thus a disciple of Plato might mean no more than one who had put himself under that teacher of philosophy to be taught or to be instructed by him; and he might be correctly called a pupil or scholar as soon as his name was so enrolled, and even before he had received so much as a single lesson. We may add, that there is another and more inclusive meaning of the expression, namely, a disciple of Plato, not as ever personally taught by him, but as a student and recipient of his peculiar doctrines. But all this comes vastly short of the idea of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. A disciple of any teacher or philosopher, however illustrious, would never be supposed to put himself so under authority, and that through life, as no longer to be a free man or to be his own master. The disciple of Christ, however, is no mere scholar or learner, but one who takes Christ to be, not only his unerring teacher of Divine and saving truth, but also his absolute lord and master, whom he most voluntarily, and with all his heart, consents most faithfully to serve to the utmost extent of his power, and that for ever and ever. Thus the teacher, the disciple, and their intimate

and perpetual relationship are perfectly unique, and without actual or even possible example. The disciple may often and very greatly come short of his manifold obligation, and that without losing the reality and title of discipleship. But why? Simply because the grace of the master is so exhaustless, that so long and so often as there is repentance there is also forgiveness. Such we take to be the true disciple of Jesus Christ. Such, we are assured, were those to whom this commission was given. Of course many then, as ever since, have wrongly professed to be such, as Judas, Simon Magus, and countless others. The Apostles here specially addressed were true disciples, had been previously employed by Christ in doing the work spoken of within the borders of their own country, and were now, with enlarged knowledge of the Gospel, commanded to go to all lands to preach that Gospel, and so to make disciples of all the nations of the world. Let us again allude to the different meanings of the expression "make disciples of," or in one word "disciple all the nations," and of the phrase "teaching them to observe." In the former case, no man can be said to be "discipled" or "made a disciple," till he has actually accepted Christ to be his absolute master on the one hand, and his Divine and unerring teacher on the other. Then, and not till then, he is to be treated as a "disciple" and "taught," not, as too often supposed, what he needs to know in order to become a disciple, but what he ought to be made to know in order to obey the commands of his master, or to lead the life and to fulfil the duties and obligations of one already discipled or made a disciple. This may seem needless repetition, but will afterwards be seen to be of use

3rd. Here we have no instructions as to the work in view. We are simply told of all nations being discipled. However, the Apostles had been previously taught by the example of Christ, and by their own experience, in preaching as He directed. We may say that He has left an example which all would do well to follow even to the present day. Whilst going out and in amongst His disciples after His resurrection, He would give the most ample instructions as to their future work. We are not to suppose that the words here recorded by Matthew were alone expressed by Him. They certainly convey in the fittest and most condensed form all that was absolutely needed for the grand purpose in view. But, as said, they do not announce the means to be used. This is done, at least so far, in the corresponding words of the Evangelist Mark, whatever view we may take of chapter xvi. 9-20, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" ("to the whole creation," according to the R.V.), "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved," &c. The Gospel, then, is the means to be used. Still, we are not yet told what the Gospel really is. This was reserved to the Evangelist Luke, by whom it is finely recorded, chap. xxiv. 45-49, "Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures; and He said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Here we have the Gospel to be preached beautifully and expressly set forth. Still it was not yet perfectly so, till the Holy Spirit had interpreted to the Apostles the grand mystery

of the Cross and the truth as it is in Jesus. Accordingly it is added, "Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high." The last of the Evangelists has yet somewhat to add, "And when He had said this, He showed unto them His hands and His side. The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever (sins) ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 20-23). The Apostles were to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Here they are so enthroned, and here their chief judicial function is announced. All along they have been so sitting, and they will continue so to sit till the end of the age. They were to judge all, forgiving or retaining the sins of every one. In what way? Not by personal contact and unerring knowledge, but by the Gospel which they were ordained and commanded to preach, and by which they infallibly set forth the law of universal judgment, according to which all sins would be either forgiven or retained. So Paul expressly declares, nay, virtually repeats, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my Gospel, by Jesus Christ"—the Gospel of him and of all the other Apostles (Rom. ii. 16). This is the only way in which the Apostles could possibly be fit judges of secret thoughts as well as outward actions of men, namely, that of preaching such a Gospel as Jesus Himself, the true judge, could use as an infallible rule by which He could and would justly deal with all, forgiving or retaining the sins of men. Does this appear an inadequate interpretation? It is in perfect keeping with what Christ elsewhere clearly declared, "And if any man hear My sayings, and keep them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I spake not from Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John xii. 47-49), that is, men would be judged at last by His words, or by His Apostles' words, the same one Gospel, and that in full accord with what we have observed, Paul says, "According to my Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16)—the Gospel of Christ, of the Apostles, of the entire Scriptures, and of the Apostolic commission, to prepare for the fit and powerful preaching of which we have found the Risen Lord symbolically breathed on the Apostles and actually imparted to them the needful and most precious gift of the Holy Spirit. In harmony with all this, we find, in the opening of the Acts of the Apostles, the disciples represented as not departing from Jerusalem, but waiting the promise of the Father of which Christ had told them, "John indeed baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with (or, in) the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). The story of Pentecost wonderfully illustrates the first and most instructive work of fulfilling the Apostolic commission. The entire history of the Acts is just a like instructive account of the carrying on of the same Divine work; and the history of the Church is more or less correctly an account of the

same. Perhaps it may be well to refer to one illustrative example—"And on the morrow he (Paul) went forth with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God. And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they had believed" (Acts xiv. 20–23).

II.—Baptism of Disciples.

1st. As the Revised Translation is to be preferred to the Authorised, in rendering "disciple" or "make disciples" and not "teach," so here the former is also to be preferred to the latter in rendering, not "in the name," but "into the name"-" baptising them into the name of the Father," &c. To "baptise in the name" would mean to "baptise by the command, with the authority or the like," whereas "to baptise into the name," means to baptise into the doctrine of, into the belief of. into union with, into the acknowledgment of, or the like. Here the real force of the commission might be expressed thus: "Go ye, in My name, or with My authority, and make disciples of all the nations; baptising them into the name, into the doctrine, belief, acknowledgment of, or into the profession of saving relationship to, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost." This would imply that all duly baptised ought to be previously instructed

with regard to the glorious doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in their relation to the salvation of the world. It may be said that such could not have been done in the case of the very first disciples. Possibly these were baptised, of course implicitly, in the name of Jesus Christ, but expressly into His name, which would, when rightly explained, mean the same thing as the name here fully given, namely, that of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It has been supposed that the words of the commission are too doctrinal and formal to have been original, or to have been used from the beginning. However, Christ had so instructed His Apostles, and so familiarised their minds with the names, works, relations, and the like, of His Father on the one hand, and of the Holy Spirit on the other, that there seems no adequate reason for doubting, or in any way calling in question the exact words, we may say, the wonderfully perfect form of the commission, as actually given by Jesus Christ. We have said that "the name of Jesus," and "the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," are virtually equivalent; so that to be baptised into either would be equally suitable in the case, especially of the earliest disciples. To be a disciple of Jesus would be to be united to Him as his Teacher, his Lord and Master, and that before he had received the instructions which were sure to follow. We have a simple illustration of this in John viii. 30-32: "As He spake these things, many believed on Him;" and might have been called disciples and baptised accordingly. But it is added, "Jesus therefore said to those Jews which had believed Him, If ye abide in My Word, (then) are ye truly My disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Here Christ really calls those who receive and continue in His Word, His true disciples, and that before they know the full-orbed truth as it is in Him, which alone can lead to genuine liberty; so that, if any one fully received Him as the Messiah, and professed so to do, he might be justly baptised into Christ, and continuing in His Word, would come to know, as He did not know before, the doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2nd. Whatever else or more, baptism at the very least implies a confession or profession of faith of one description or another. It has often been spoken of as baptism into the name of the Holy Trinity, thus leading the thoughtful mind to the contemplation of the great mystery of the nature of the Tri-unity of the Godhead and so, at the very outset, to one of the most profound and perplexing questions which can engage the Christian mind. We have no doubt that the mysterious Tri-unity is here assuredly implied. Still the words do not directly point to this underlying doctrine, but to the most practical and needful revelation of God in relation to His grandest work, that of human redemption. The unity seems implied in the one name of all, not in a separate name for each—in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Whilst rejoicing in the announcement, "I and My Father are one," and the equally true revelation of the oneness of the Holy Spirit with both Father and Son, we feel assured that the three names here and elsewhere employed point directly to the distinctive threefold office or work in the economy of salvation. Each name is a special revelation in itself, other names rightly belong to all and are fitly used of all; but here no other

names could be appropriate. In fact, in this Triune name we have the most condensed and all-comprehending revelation of the whole truth and plan of redemption. As we view it, we take the name Father to set forth the blessed God and Creator of all-first, in the relation and character of the gracious and merciful Father of the sinful and ruined children of men, and, as such, the real origin or fountain of the whole scheme and work of salvation; secondly, of the eternal and glorious Father of that Beloved Son, whom He has sent into the world for the salvation of His guilty and ruined children; and, thirdly, of the reconciled and eternally loving Father of all who penitently and believingly return to Him through Jesus Christ. The name Son we regard as pointing to the Divine Redeemer as the only begotten and well-beloved of the Father, provided and appointed to be the glorious medium through which the grand purpose of grace and salvation would be realised, in harmony with all the laws and aims of the Universal Kingdom of God, the actual and eternal salvation of mankind. The name Holy Spirit we believe to have been divinely and appropriately selected, not so much as expressive of what He is in Himself, as in this sense, all are alike infinitely holy, but as pointing to the fact that, in the gracious economy, it is His special part to "convince the world of sin," and so of the need of salvation, to lead to the knowledge and acceptance of the Son; and thus, by inspiring with love to Father and Son, to make new creatures in Christ Jesus, the holy new born Children of the Holy God and Father; in a word, the name Holy Spirit, emphatically, though by no means exclusively, means Holy-making Spirit, of course vastly more is involved in this threefold baptismal name,

to decipher which the baptised will take no mere present life, but the whole life of eternity itself. We only add that, from all this, we may clearly see that the Baptismal Formula, here laid down by the great Head of the Christian Church, is the real creed of all who would, by baptism, profess to be disciples of Christ, subjects of His Kingdom, members of that true and Universal Church. In fact, in this Baptismal Formula, we have the Christ-given Creed of the true and universal Church of Christ. It is enough for every age and every land. Let no one, let no people, add to it, or take from it. Let it be the song as well as the creed of every Christian and of every Christian Church:—

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, The God whom we adore, Be glory, as it was, and is, And shall be evermore!

3rd. We are next led to treat of the external observance of the sacred ordinance; and we may say, that we do not mean to do much more, in this place, than to assume what we believe to be correct, and to indicate what we deem the fitness of the mode to express the meaning of the ordinance. In the case of the other ordinance, that of the Supper of our Lord, all may easily see the fitness of the mode to express the meaning, so that, we may be assured, this is true in the one case as it is in the other.

That the original mode of baptism was that of immersion in water is the belief of the great mass of professing Christians. Such is the practice of the Greek Church to the present day. Such was the practice of the western or Roman Church for the first twelve centuries of the Christian Era. Such is the law of the

Episcopal Church of England as recorded in the Prayer Book, though strangely and inconsistently, sprinkling, the declared exception, has long become the practical rule. By the Westminster Assembly, by which the practice of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, England, and Ireland was determined, sprinkling was adopted by no more than the casting vote of the President. As Biblical study and Ecclesiastical research advance, the conviction that immersion was the primitive mode goes on to advance among those who continue to practise sprinkling, but who regard it as a matter of indifference what mode is employed. As to New Testament Scripture, we appear to have the most decisive evidence in favour of immersion. We can only wonder at the doubts of any as to the mode in the case of John the Baptist. The descriptive words seem absolutely demonstrative. The gospel of Christ was to all intents the gospel of John; and we have not the slightest reason for supposing that the mode of baptism of the one differed from that of the other. Here we are told of no change as to either the subjects or the mode of baptism; and we are thus led to infer, that the Apostles would go on, after the resurrection of their Master as before His death, to baptise the same class of subjects and after the same manner, as He had taught them in the days of His and of their previous ministry. This is fully borne out by the history of the Acts of the Apostles, in which we find sufficiently express information as to how they and others carried out this great and final commission.

It may be well here to note that, in an important sense, the baptism which followed the resurrection of Jesus differed from that which preceded His death. The latter was of course expressive of a less amount of redemptive truth. That truth was greatly and more richly revealed after the perfect life and glorious work of Christ were ended. As this truth was unfolded the meaning of baptism would be opened up. So it was in the case of the other ordinance, that of the Lord's Supper, which, when instituted before the death which it was designed to commomorate, could not possibly be understood as it doubtless was when first observed after the conversion of the multitude on the Day of Pentecost. And so it could not but be in the case of baptism; still, from first to last, and to the present day, there may be said to have been but one and the same baptism. Those before and those after were baptised into one and the same Messiah, on the one hand as to come soon to lay the foundation of His Kingdom, and on the other, as having, by the descent of the Spirit and the preaching of Peter, actually begun to rear His Kingdom upon it. Even the baptism of John was virtually a baptism of Christ, the very terms of the gospel of the one being exactly those of the gospel of the other,- "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" though of course, John's baptism ceased to be appropriate, or even truthful, after his gospel had ceased to be appropriate, or even truthful, after the Kingdom, as well as King, had actually come.

We have said that both ordinances are assuredly suitable in external form to their spiritual import or meaning. That of bread and wine, bread broken and wine poured forth, is symbolical or representative of the broken body and shed blood of the Sacrificial Lamb, broken and shed for the redemption of the world, and for the neurishment of the Church, or of those of the

world who are born anew through the reception of the life-giving Son of God, and not of those of the world who remain in spiritual death through the rejection of that one and only source of life. This ordinance, it will be perceived, is intended to symbolise the continued nourishment and support of those who are supposed to have been born again, or to possess the new and heavenly life. So with the other ordinance of which we are treating. We cannot doubt that the all-wise Head of the Church provided a like appropriate form to represent or symbolise the corresponding portion of saving truth. Just as the symbols of bread and wine were fitted to express more than could be seen at the first, but not more than could be appreciated in all after times; so the symbol of immersion in water was fitted to set forth more than could be understood before the day of Pentecost, but not more than could be comprehended after the more complete doctrine of Christ was known and proclaimed. At first, all might appear to symbolise no more than that cleansing which consists in the Divine forgiveness and spiritual purification which follow repentance and the confession of sin; and if no more was to be symbolised, we do not see how immersion should be essential to the ordinance, or how the simpler pouring or sprinkling of water should not fully suffice for the purpose. But if Christ intended, as we may well believe He did, to represent vastly more, nay, something very different, we need not wonder if we find that neither pouring nor sprinkling could possibly answer the full end in view.

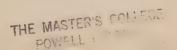
Let us, then, consider that end, and how far immersion, the actually and certainly primitive mode, is alone

fitted for its appointed symbolic purpose. Some have held that the two ordinances relate, the one to the Holy Spirit and His work, and the other to the Son and His work; and that, therefore, sprinkling or pouring, expressive simply of cleansing or sanctifying—that is to say, the application of water in any way—is just as appropriate as immersion or the use of any quantity of water; in fact, that, as the Holy Spirit is spoken of again and again as poured out, the method of pouring would seem to be the most appropriate of all; and that it seems contrary to all reason to suppose that a few drops of water, in such a case, might not as well be used as a whole river or ocean. We have virtually admitted as much already, and we are fully prepared to admit it again. However, we are very far indeed from allowing that baptism symbolises the work of the Spirit alone, or that the Lord's Supper points to the entire work of Christ, or to more than His death and what more immediately relates to it. As already said, the Supper is for Christians alone, or those born anew, and sets forth mainly, if not entirely, Christ as their spiritual food. Baptism, again, points to the whole truth professed, or to the whole work of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The formula implies all this. That which most fitly and fully symbolises what is thus professed, and that as the initiatory rite of the Christian Church, must be the most appropriate, and that which we might expect to be alone chosen for the purpose. ask, then, Have we sufficient reason for regarding immersion as alone complete? What of baptism into the name of the Father? In what way is His work to be symbolised? We take it to be that of originating and devising the whole scheme of salvation, and of sending forth the Son and the Holy Spirit to do His whole will by doing His whole work as thus devised by Him; so that the baptism which most fitly and fully symbolised the work or works of Son and Spirit, would at the same time most fitly and fully symbolise His work. This would be true, whatever the nature or form of the rite might be. What now of the work of the Son? Certainly it includes His great sacrifice as well as does that set forth by the Supper, but on a totally different principle. It relates to the new birth of the believer and not to the food of the re-born. To those who receive Christ, to them He gives the power to become the "children of God." Such are born of the incorruptible seed, even Jesus Himself. In order to this, there must be union with Him as a Saviour, or in His very birth, and life, and death, and resurrection, and final glory. This is clearly set forth in Rom. vi. 1-7; and in Col. ii. 11-13. In both places the baptised are said to be dead and buried with Christ, as also raised from the dead with Him. Now, whatever the form of baptism, the baptised must be set forth as thus dead and raised from the dead. The symbol which would set forth these two would at the same time symbolise the new or second birth of the believer; for what would more strikingly show forth a new or second birth than that which represented the death and resurrection of anyone? Along with this, the death of the believer in the death of Christ would involve the sin and condemnation of the sinner; just as the resurrection of the believer in the resurrection of Christ would involve his forgiveness and justification. What, lastly, of the work of the Holy Spirit, or that of inspiring, renewing, cleansing? Here the cleansing element of water sug-

gests the cleansing, sanctifying work of the Spirit; and that we have not passed into the service of the exclusive method of immersion. Only the Spirit leads to union with Christ, and so to the new birth through that union. Accordingly He is again and again regarded as the Spirit of regeneration; and, as such, too often He is said to renew the heart first or to create the new man first, and then to lead to Christ next. So far this is true, but only so far. We must not forget that the new man is not one made new directly and apart from relationship to Christ, but created, doubtless by the Spirit, yet as the Spirit of life in Christ, and as creating the new man in Christ Jesus. The mistaken reference of the words of Christ to Nicodemus to baptism and not to the new birth alone, has led many to treat the work of the Spirit as leading to the new birth apart altogether from faith in Jesus Christ. Whatever the Spirit may do before faith and in order to the new birth, He cannot be said really or fully to effect that birth till He has inspired a genuine faith in Christ or brought about through faith, a real or living union with Him. Hence, whilst the new birth is traced in John iii. 1-5, to the Spirit, it is as expressly traced in 1 Peter i. 23, to the "incorruptible seed, through the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." We are therefore to regard the work of the Spirit as that of convincing of sin and leading to the reception of Christ; and thus of inspiring love to Christ and to God, and thus creating new life and bringing about the new birth. We have set all this forth at length, that we may now clearly see the whole combined work of the Son and the Spirit wonderfully and pictorially symbolised by the rite of immersion. We have the death and resurrection of Christ, and the death and resurrection and therefore the new birth of the believer through union with Him. We have the new birth at the same time set forth as effected by the life-giving Spirit by His thus uniting the believer to Christ in His death and resurrection. We have also, in the washing with water the whole cleansing, purifying, sanctifying work of the Spirit fully set forth. In fact, in the mode of this initiatory rite of Baptism we have symbolised all that the baptised may be said to profess as the Truth of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and to set forth all that he would declare that, as a believer, he has received in the way of salvation through the work thus symbolised.

We may here simply add, that we can thus see the relation of the one ordinance to the other, in that baptism specially points to the spiritual life and birth of the believer in Jesus, whilst the Supper specially points to the spiritual sustenance, nourishment, or food of the spiritually renewed or born again in Him. The former points to the one and only spiritual birth. The latter points to the frequent supply and use of the one and only spiritual food. The one, accordingly, should be observed but once, and at the opening of the Christian's career. The other should be observed more or less frequently to the end of the Christian's life, or till Christ comes to him as He will come to all at last.

4th. It is of great consequence to note and to keep in view the important principle, that when we are said to be baptised in water into any person or thing, we are not supposed to be thereby instrumentally or conditionally connected with that person or thing. Thus,



in the case of the Baptism of John, "into or unto repentance" (Matt. iii. 11); or, "the baptism of repentance for or unto the remission of sins" (Mark i. 4), we are not for one moment to think that the baptism was intended to create or to lead to repentance, or to secure or bring about the remission of sins. Only those who actually repented and so obtained the remission of their sins, were the fit subjects of John's Baptism. Consequently he demands a sincere or real repentance and confession of sin. Only in the case of such sincerity and reality could baptism be an outward and practical declaration of forgiveness and acceptance of God. This should be well marked, as it seems to supply an important key to other passages of Scripture, less easily or certainly understood. Thus, "Repent ye, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive not remission and forgiveness, but the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 38). Here, as above, is a baptism unto repentance for or unto remission, certainly not creating repentance; for the repentance is expressly said to go before the baptism, whilst the remission is infallibly connected with the repentance, nay, "in the name of Jesus Christ," implying the pre-existence of faith in Him for that remission. Accordingly repentance and faith in Jesus for remission must be truly entertained before an acceptable baptism can be enjoyed, and therefore cannot be properly said to be given on the one hand, and obtained on the other, by or through the baptism. However, the baptism was the appointed way in which repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ were to be expressed or professed on the part of penitent believers, and the appointed way in

which remission and acceptance were emblematically expressed or declared on the part of Him who authorised or appointed the baptism. So, to be "baptised into Jesus Christ," does not mean to be made one with Him by baptism, before or apart from the real oneness with Him by faith, but means to be declared or symbolically represented as already actually made one with Him by faith. We do not mean that the repentance and faith are so to precede the baptism, that they may to all intents have no real or living connection with it. The faith which precedes is to be specially exercised at and in the baptism. The baptised is to go forth to his baptism in the full faith of Christ, as at the very first; he is to realise his oneness with Christ in the baptism itself; he is to go down into the water as if he were one with Christ in death and burial, and to rise out of the water as if raised from the dead in and through the resurrection of Christ; and he is to act in time to come as if all past sin were forgiven, his death for sin passed away or his resurrection-life begun; and he is to regard himself as bound in all time coming to walk in and with Christ in newness of life. In fact, the very first act, after becoming a believer in Christ or a disciple of Christ, ought to be his baptism into Christ-so it was with many at the beginning-so it was with the Ethiopian eunuch—so it was with Saul of Tarsus, Paul the Apostle—so it was with many before and since. And if the lapse of time and the possibilities of self-deception on the one hand, and of insincerity on the other, did not require the exercise of prudence, the practice referred to might wisely and well be maintained in the case of all who seem converted or discipled everywhere, and to the end of the Christ-

ian age. In this way would we see the fitness of expressions used of baptism which seem to give more than undue virtue to the ceremonial itself, and thus to take from the full virtue of the bare and simple faith, which ought to go before baptism or even fitness for baptism, and to accept and so take possession of a full or perfect salvation, and that as a free and unmerited gift of the blessed God through Jesus Christ. Coming thus early or immediately after the reception of Christ, with forgiveness and salvation in Him, such were the words Ananias addressed to the penitent and believing Saul of Tarsus. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (His Name, R.V.), (Acts xxii. 16); that the spiritual and the symbolic acts almost coincided; so that we might suppose Saul in a state of faith, repentance, and conscious acceptance of the Divine forgiveness going forth to be baptised as if to do and to receive what was simply symbolised, yet what would be as if the very reality, the washing away of his sins; and yet he was not left to trace his forgiveness to the washing, but as a response to his "calling on the name of the Lord," the very thing which doubtless he had done, and done effectually before, as Ananias had been expressly told, "Behold, he prayeth." Accordingly, both baptism and the Lord's Supper may be said to be a pictorial representation of the first faith of the disciple as born anew, and of the continued faith of the Christian as feeding on the Son of God. Strange and seemingly most inconsistent would it be if the one, that of the Supper, was to be so of faith, that without the spiritual discernment of the Lord's body, it could not be observed aright and acceptably, but the reverse; and yet that the other, that of baptism, as in the case of infants, might be observed aright and acceptably apart altogether from faith, or even the possibility of faith, and so without the possibility of any discernment of the spiritual meaning of the ordinance, or even any sense or meaning or personal knowledge of the fact of the observance of any baptism whatever. All is simple, all is consistent, all is intelligible, all is rich and grand in spiritual meaning, when we neither add to, nor take from, nor alter, by "one jot or one tittle," the last great command of the risen Lord and ascending King.

III.—The Teaching of the Baptised Disciples.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

1st. Here the translation is quite correct. It is astonishing to how great an extent the real meaning of the commission has been obscured, nay, been greatly misunderstood, by the use of the right word here -"teach,"-instead of "disciple" or "make disciples" in the first clause as well as in the third, and as if the same verb were used in both clauses. There may be a great deal of teaching needed in order that one may be made a disciple; but there may be a great deal of teaching or preaching about Christ, and yet no one may be discipled or made a disciple. Certainly no one ever was or could be made a disciple by such teaching as that referred to in this third clause, that of teaching what those already made disciples are required to do in obedience to the commands of their master. We might as well say that a man might become a servant,

not by entering into an express engagement with the master, but by being instructed as to the nature and duties of the service of such as are actually so engaged. Further, we have really pointed out that one may become a disciple and be rightly so called before he has received a single lesson or command from his teacher or master. He and the teacher or master have simply to enter into a relation of the character supposed; and then, and not till then, may he receive his first lesson as a disciple, or his first command as a servant. As a matter of fact, thousands became disciples by simply accepting Christ as their Teacher and Lord on the Day of Pentecost, before they were instructed as to what Christ required and expected them to do in obedience to Him as their Lord and Master. They might require and did require to be taught or to be made to learn very much about Christ before they did or could accept Him as their Lord and Master; but they required no further instruction as to His will or service in order to be disciples, but only to know what, as disciples or servants, they had to do in order to do their duty in the subsequent work of serving and pleasing their Master. In fact, the teaching here spoken of is that needed and commanded in the case of those already made and baptised as disciples of Jesus Christ. At the very outset this should be well kept in view, as very frequently, by cutting off the distinctive part of this clause and using no more than "teaching," the real meaning is concealed, and the whole interpretation of the commission mistaken. The whole is thus put: "make disciples, baptising and teaching," as if the Apostles were to go and make disciples, not by preaching, but by baptising and teaching, as if the teaching here spoken of were the teaching by which men were made disciples, or in fact the Gospel, and not the teaching of those already made disciples by the preaching of the Gospel in all the subsequent duties of the Christian life. We repeat, the teaching here meant never did make a disciple, and is not of a nature fitted to do so.

2nd. In keeping with all this we find the Apostles or first-preachers going about and so speaking that people were led to believe, and thus to become disciples, and to be baptised as such, and then were instructed as to their future course of service. We have already referred to a case illustrative of this, namely, Acts xiv. 21-23, "And when they had preached the Gospel in that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had appointed for them elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they had believed." Thus after Pentecost and in time following, wherever men were made disciples, they were formed into Christian communities or Churches, over which elders or officebearers were appointed, and the teaching here referred to carried on. This was doubtless according to the previous instructions or commands of Christ, who so far at least spoke of the Church to be afterwards founded and built, and who doubtless led the Apostles, by the inspiration and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, to do all that was needful to be done in thus providing for the edification of the disciples and in order to their growth in grace on the one hand and their carrying on the work of the world's conversion on the other.

3rd. These words as to their teaching of the baptised disciples open up the whole work of preaching and teaching in all after time. They thus lead us to contemplate the wonderful provision which has since been made for the enlargement and enlightenment of the Christian Church, and for the conversion and salvation and progressive advancement, spiritually and temporally, of the entire human race.

SECTION III.

THE COMMISSION MISINTERPRETED.

We have now given what we deem a clear and correct interpretation of the Apostolic commission. We need not say how endless has been the variety of meanings which have been put upon it or discussions to which, for ages, it has given rise. One great aim has been to find in it authority for the doctrine of Infant Baptism, or at least to show that it contains nothing inconsistent with what is held to be ample proof of that doctrine, whether expressed in various portions of the New Testament or derived from the general spirit and scope of Scripture. Here we shall deal with the commission alone; leaving other points for after consideration:—

Ist. We shall begin with an old and often repeated view, according to which "discipling" or "making disciples" is regarded as equivalent to "proselyting"; as if there was no real or essential difference between the admission of Gentile proselytes into the Jewish nation or kingdom of Israel, and that of those here called disciples into the Christian Church. Emphatically it is urged, that the Apostles were Jews and were familiar with the fact that children and parents were alike admitted; so that it would seem natural for the former to be baptised along with the latter. In this way it is maintained by an old writer, and repeated

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over and over by others afterwards, that, if the commission had run thus, "Go ye, and make proselytes of all the nations; circumcising them," &c., the Apostles would have inferred that they were to baptise children along with their parents in time to come as they had never baptised them before. Strange that this, which really assumes what ought to be proved, should be deemed infallibly demonstrative of the origin of infant baptism as coming in the room of infant circumcision. Strange that Christian teachers of rank, even such as Dr. Wardlaw and others, could suppose it possible for Christ to have so used the terms of the old economy, when issuing His distinctive and constitutive commission as to the new, the more especially as He, like the Baptist, had previously so restricted His baptism to those disciples, whom we are told He made and directed to be baptised. To have altered the terms of the commission, as ingeniously and for the sake of argument, as He is above fancied capable of doing, is what we can on no account suppose. As said already, it proceeds entirely upon the very thing to be proved, and with which we shall deal in due course, namely, the imagined identity of the nation of Israel on the one hand, and the kingdom of Christ on the other.

We have the true key to the Apostolic practice. They needed no inferential reasoning. They had no difficulty in connection with the children of believers or unbelievers, of Jews or Gentiles. Jesus had taught them whom and in what manner they were to baptise, just as He had taught them by whom and in what manner the Supper was to be observed. All was prepared by wise and kind anticipation before He left the world. They thus well knew what to do within their

own country: and when, on the eve of His Ascension, He commanded them to make disciples in all countries, baptising them into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things He commanded, they were at no loss to understand His meaning, or to know how to proceed when, on the day of Pentecost, endued with power from on high, Peter so preached as to make many disciples, as to have these duly baptised in or upon the name of Jesus, and as to teach them to observe "the Breaking of Bread," the sacred Supper, and other commands of Jesus. They baptised these disciples, and many others, far and near, were baptised afterwards: but we never read of them or of any others so interpreting the commands of their Master as to baptise a single infant, male or female, for a good way more than a hundred years after this sacred and inviolable commission was, on this most solemn and glorious day, given by Him whom all should profoundly love and perfectly obey.

2nd. We may next allude to the low and inadequate ideas entertained and upheld as to the discipleship intended by our risen Lord. It is maintained that "a disciple of Christ" means no more than "a mere scholar or pupil;" and that, therefore, the veriest infants, providentially placed within the circle, and under the influences of a Christian family, may be regarded as disciples of disciples of Christ, and therefore of Christ Himself, especially when it is added, as it often is, to borrow the words of Dr. Wardlaw, "I am strongly inclined to agree with those who regard the children of believers in the light of disciples. If their parents do their duty they surely are such. It is quite impossible to say how soon the Holy Spirit may begin His secret

operations in the soul of a child, under spiritual training, and the subject of believing prayer. And until the principles which are instilled into the child's mind by early tuition are either avowedly rejected, or are shown to be professed without influence on the heart and life -how can we be entitled to say that they are not disciples?" This, however, is not the question; but, how can we be entitled to say that they are disciples? We are certainly commanded to baptise not those whom we cannot deny to be disciples, but those whom we believe to be disciples. Dr. Wardlaw reasons on the supposition that only the children of believers, or those only who are sure of Christian education, ought to be baptised. And, if infant baptism had been appointed at all, we know of no more likely a basis on which it could have been so. It may be laid down as a law of the Kingdom of Grace that to their Christian parents children ought, as Dr. Wardlaw's words suggest, to be indebted for the second birth as they are for their first. This all such parents should be taught and led most profoundly to feel. The great Commission as addressed to them commands, not that they treat their children as disciples or Christians, because they themselves are Christians, and so to have them baptised as if they were actually born Christians, but to receive them from God to bring them to Christ, to make them His real and undoubted disciples, to lead them so to receive Him as to be born anew, and thus to enter through the only gate of the Kingdom. Then will their baptism be according to the will of Christ, have a meaning which no one need misunderstand, and cause a parental joy which no other baptism can possibly create. But this is far from all. Dr. Wardlaw finely alludes to what all

may gladly accept as true, we refer to the secret workings of the Divine Spirit in the hearts of the youngest; and may still more gladly be assured of such saving operations in the case of all those who pass away in tender years; still, when we keep in view such as are spared to know and exercise the responsibilities of at least early, if not maturer life, we must not think merely of the first and more secret quickenings of the Holy Spirit, as if these alone constituted the second or heavenly birth of the New Testament. They may be all needed, whether in the case of the old or of the young, in order to that birth; but they are not that birth itself. Every one must be born of water as well as Spirit-the water of life as well as the Spirit of life—who would enter the Kingdom of Heaven, or be duly, and according to the commandment of Jesus, baptised as a disciple, or as one who has been truly made a disciple, "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holv Ghost." Hence, not more truly is it said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6), than it is said, "Born (begotten) again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth . . . and this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you" (1 Peter i. 23, 25). Just as Christ connects the water and the Spirit, Peter and all others connect the Word and Spirit, or Spirit and Word, in the grand work of regeneration throughout the whole Bible; and thus, as we have again and again affirmed, only those led by the Spirit to believe in Jesus and so, to "call Him Lord," can be ranked with the twice-born or the genuine disciples of the commission, and therefore are alone to be treated as the subjects of Christian baptism.

3rd. There are those who make believing, or what we have deemed Christian discipleship, no necessary condition of baptism in the case of the adult any more than in that of the young. This view has been widely spread among our Congregational friends in the south. The argument from circumcision, still upheld more or less in the north, has lost its hold on many of them, even on their leading minds, such as Dr. Goodrich, in his "Primer of Congregationalism," and the late Dr. Dale in his "Manual of Congregational Principles." The views taken of baptism by these and other ministers are almost entirely those first brought prominently forward by Dr. Halley in his "Congregational Lecture, Tenth Series, on the Sacraments." In this work Dr. Halley astonished many, and especially Dr. Wardlaw-(1), by powerfully assailing Dr. Wardlaw's argument based on circumcision for infant baptism; and (2), by building an argument based on the wording of the commission, according to the grammatical construction of which he maintained that, not believers or converts and these alone, but the nations themselves were to be baptised first and taught next, or to be made disciples by baptising and teaching them. In this way, what had been called "Believers' Baptism" was to be entirely laid aside, whilst the fullest scope was to be given to baptise, not only all classes of children, but also all classes of adults who simply consented to be instructed in the doctrines of Christ. With this amazing laxity Dr. Wardlaw was simply horrified; and, whilst he did his best to defend his Old Testament argument for infant baptism from Dr. Halley's powerful attack, he, at the same time, assailed the whole line of Dr. Halley's reasoning in support of what he deemed contrary to all

reason as well as to all Scripture. So thoroughly were these two able and highly-distinguished Pædobaptists, and, we may say, representative Congregationalists, opposed to one another, that one of the same denomination and of distinction also, is said to have quaintly given, as his reason for becoming a Baptist, his agreement with both Dr. Wardlaw and Dr. Halley—with Dr. Halley in overcoming Dr. Wardlaw, and with Dr. Wardlaw in overcoming Dr. Halley; so completely do they at least appear to demolish each others' arguments for infant baptism, that I do not suppose a Baptist could succeed better in the diffusion of his views among intelligent Pædobaptists than by commending the study of the works of these two most able and excellent upholders of infant baptism.

Let us, then, borrow the following from Dr. Halley. Passing over his able, and, we deem, most successful attack on the argument from circumcision, we shall quote his opening remarks as to the commission, "The Sacraments," Lec. 14, p. 1:—"The precise point of inquiry being suggested by the terms of our Lord's commission, we cannot too constantly or carefully keep them in view. Go ye, therefore, and teach, or disciple, all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The question respecting the subjects of baptism is here resolved into one of grammar and criticism. It is simply. What is the antecedent to the word them, or for what noun is that pronoun substituted? Going forth, disciple all the nations $(\pi \acute{a}\nu\tau a \ \dot{\epsilon} \acute{\theta}\nu\eta)$, baptising them (αὐτοὺς), all the nations, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them, all the nations, to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you. So far as the grammatical construction is concerned, the meaning of the terms is precisely as it would be if the words of the commission were baptise all the nations. Adhering, therefore, to the grammar of the words, we say the commission, which no man has a right to alter, is—baptise all the nations." In a note it is added, "I suppose no one will object that $a\dot{v}\tau o\dot{v}_{S}$, being masculine, does not refer to $\pi \acute{a}v\tau a \ \tau \grave{a} \ \emph{e}\theta v\eta$, being neuter, as this would betray gross ignorance of the common rule of Greek syntax . . . respecting the reference of pronouns to neuter nouns."

Such is Dr. Halley's critical and infallible interpretation of the great commission. The apostles and their successors are to go into all the world, not to preach the Gospel and thus convert people, and then baptise those converted, but to baptise people first and then teach them, not the Gospel of Christ, but to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them; and all this on the sole ground of the grammatical construction of the sentence. If it be a matter of Greek syntax, many will say, then the great commission cannot pertain to us, for we have never so much as heard if there was such a thing as Greek syntax. If it belongs to the learned, we must leave it to be settled by the learned; and yet it would seem passing strange that the perfect Teacher should give forth a command which all His disciples are called upon to obey in one way or another, and yet that He should have expressed it in language of whose meaning only the learned could have any certainty, nay, as to whose meaning even the learned decidedly differ.

Now we may fully assure all that, with our Revised

Version before them, they may use their own good sense and interpret with as much confidence as any Greek scholar, however learned. As in the Greek, so in the English the antecedent to the them is the all nations. And the simple question is—What does this imply? Does it imply that the nations are to be baptised first and to be taught to observe the commands of Christ next? or, does it mean that they are to have the Gospel preached to them first, and then to be baptised next, just as they are successively discipled or made disciples? One would suppose that the latter would commend itself to every mind as the only possible meaning. To few would it ever occur that Dr. Halley could possibly be correct in saying that "Go, and disciple all the nations, baptising them," meant no more, less or else, than "Go, and baptise all the nations." The discovery of such an identity, with such marked apparent difference, would seem to imply great peculiarity of mind. However, the principle on which Dr. Halley proceeds is very simple. He takes the two participles, "baptising" and "teaching," which follow the imperative, "disciple" or "make disciples," to indicate the manner in which the work of discipling is to be accomplished. "Disciple all the nations:" how? "Baptising and teaching," or "by baptising and teaching." That this is in keeping with the grammatical structure of the commission, Dr. Halley and others most strenuously insist. If the words had run thus—disciple, baptising and teaching; if there was no adverse reason, we fully agree that the meaning might be-disciple, baptising and teaching, or by baptising and teaching; so that all that could be meant would be, as Dr. Halley maintains—go, and baptise and teach all the nations.

Then, of course, the door would be open for the baptism of the youngest children. They could be baptised in earliest days, and taught afterwards as they came to be able to learn. But this mode of interpretation is met with the most invincible difficulties, and is upheld only by keeping out of sight, not only the entire meaning of the several clauses of the commission, but also the whole instructions elsewhere given in the New Testament respecting the actual fulfilment of the commission.

(1.) Let us consider the commission itself. We have again and again set forth the ordinary, and what we deem the only correct interpretation, namely-(1), Disciple or make disciples by preaching the Gospel, and so by leading men to receive Christ as their Saviour, their Lord and Master; (2), When thus made disciples, or become Christians, baptise them into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; (3), Thus baptised, teach them to do the will of Christ, or to observe all that He has commanded—disciple, baptise, instruct; three distinct things. Dr. Halley, again, would do only two things-namely, baptise, instruct. And why? Because he would disciple or make disciples by baptising and instructing. He holds that grammar and criticism admit of his method alone; we hold that grammar and criticism admit of either, provided only the entire commission consisted of no more than these three words—disciple, baptising, teaching; provided also there was nothing in the commission to prevent Dr. Halley's interpretation, and to demand the interpretation which we have given. Against Dr. Halley's we have the following:—(a), By making "discipling" to mean "baptising and teaching" he excludes the most important part from the commission-namely, that of preaching the Gospel, converting to Christ or to God; for if discipling does not imply preaching the Gospel, the preaching of the Gospel is not included. It is certainly not involved in baptising into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Further, it is as certainly not included in teaching to observe all things commanded by Christ. These things are what those already made Christians have to do in the service of Christ, not what men are to believe or receive in order to become Christians. Dr. Halley, Dr. Dale, Dr. Goodrich, and others, fall into the egregious mistake of taking the teaching of what Christians have to do, for the preaching of what sinners have to receive in order to become Christians. It never seems to have occurred to them, or to many others, that no one ever did or could become a disciple of Christ or a Christian by being taught, ever so perfectly, the sum total of a Christian's duties or obligations to Christ or to fellow-Christians. (b), To begin with baptising, as the first thing to be done in order to discipling, may seem to suit the case of infants most admirably; but it seems to be most unsuitable, nay, we cannot call it less than most ridiculous, in the case of adults. The simple supposition is most ridiculous. Let a missionary begin his work by getting some poor benighted heathen to be baptised. Let us allow him to act, contrary to his creed, by giving some knowledge of Christ, and by persuading him to become a scholar in the mission, only do not suppose him to wait till Christ is fully welcomed as Saviour and King; and then and at once let him be baptised into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; further, let him

now be taught to serve Christ. What would be the result? Why, he might become a Christian by the subsequent preaching of the Gospel; or, by intensely hating and disgracing the Gospel, he might turn hundreds away from Christ and the blessings of salvation. We may give what we deem a good illustration of this fearfully mistaken interpretation of the words of the commission; we know not whether it may have been suggested long ago, or has occurred to our own mind while recently afresh considering this subject. We shall endeavour to construct a sentence grammatically similar to that of the commission. Suppose the chief of an army to command so many officers to go and recruit or make soldiers of all the young men of some Scotch or English county; providing the proper regimental uniform; carefully instructing them in all the duties and acquirements of their martial life. What would the recruiting sergeants understand these words to mean, or what would they at once know they were ordered to do? If they held by Dr. Halley's grammar and criticism, they would say we are commanded to recruit or make soldiers of all the young men of such and such a county; providing them, that is, all these young men, with the appointed uniform; instructing them, all these young men, in all the duties and arts of a soldier's life. But all this means, recruit, dressing, drilling; or recruit, by dressing and drilling. Such is the infallible grammar and criticism with which Dr. Wardlaw was horrified, and to overthrow which he was called upon to contend. We may well be supposed to give nothing short of a coarse caricature. We deal, and that sorrowfully, with the reality -disciple, baptising, teaching-that is, disciple, by

baptising and teaching; that is, go, baptise and teach; recruit by dressing and drilling. As we go on, well may we exclaim with so sober and so thoughtful a divine as Dr. Wardlaw, as he sadly dealt with the theory of his friend Halley: "And still the wonder grew." It certainly is a wonder that this grammatical argument should have ever been constructed. The simple fact is that, so far as the mere construction of such a sentence is concerned, either interpretation may be adopted just according as the nature of the thing, or as the sense of the different clauses may determine. Struck with one of these modes of interpretation, and overlooking the sense of the clauses, Dr. Halley failed to see the other, and, in this case, the better; nay, the only interpretation; and so has been the means of misleading many who have trusted rather to the correctness of his criticism than to that of their own careful and independent investigation and judgment.

(2.) We need hardly, at least at this place, refer to the more general teachings of the New Testament. We may only say, that we have virtually the same commission set forth in Mark, in Luke, and in John. We have, perhaps, the best and most decisive statement in John iv. 1–3, "When, therefore, the Lord knew how that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptised (or, R.V., was making and baptising) more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself baptised not but His disciples), he left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee." Here we have the clear distinction drawn between the making and the baptising disciples, the making first and the baptising next, all according to reason and Scripture, and that to the complete setting aside of the strange and unscriptural

theory which we have been considering, that of discipling by baptising first and teaching next, the more especially as the teaching which follows the baptising is expressly said to be not that which makes disciples, but that which those made disciples are required to follow. This seems perfectly demonstrative; and we shall leave the list of passages demonstrative of the same thing, for consideration in due course of treatment of the general subject.

4th. In close connection with the interpretation just dealt with, we find what we may call a theological theory, the aim of which is to show that the baptism of infants is to be regarded as the most natural and complete expression of the truth embodied in the rite. It is said that, as all men have suffered through the sin of the first Adam, it was emphatically right and proper that full expression should be given to counter-good secured by the mission and work of the second Adamsin and death having entered through the one, and righteousness and life having been re-introduced by the other. We shall make a few remarks on a phase of this theory, recently set forth in the "Primer of Congregationalism," by the Rev. Dr. Goodrich, to which we have already alluded. He ingeniously, though far from satisfactorily, treats of three theories of Baptism—that of Baptismal Regeneration; that of Believers' Baptism; and that of Disciples' Baptism. We had thought of Believers and Disciples as one and the same class, first called Christians at Antioch, and ever since called by the same name; but all have, it seems, been quite mistaken; and now it has been discovered that, under the genus Christian, we have two distinct species—species 'believer,' and species 'disciple';

and, not only so, but that almost the whole number and the most characteristic portion of the disciples is made up of those who know absolutely nothing of any kind of discipleship-of all classes infants are the most genuine disciples; so that their baptism is the most completely typical Christian baptism. Extremes meet; and, to nearly the same effect does the Rev. M. F. Sadler, in "The Second Adam, and the New Birth." hold infant baptism to be the perfect type of Christian baptism, though he has some very great reason for so saying, as he contends most earnestly for what Dr. Goodrich would as earnestly oppose—namely, baptismal regeneration. At present we shall refer simply to one idea of Dr. Goodrich, "Primer," p. 12. "The third doctrine of baptism is that of Disciple's baptism. This doctrine is held with some variations by Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. They hold that baptism is ordained by God, and that children are specially the subjects of baptism. In the baptism the parents and the minister as representing the Church take part. Baptism, therefore, as appointed by God, has a Godward side, and as observed by parents and Church has a manward or family and ecclesiastical side.

"Its Godward side. God in baptism does these three things: He makes a claim, He issues a precept, He makes a promise. God in baptism practically says—(1), this child's life is Mine; not its own, not its parents'; for I have given and I have redeemed its life. Therefore, I require My name to be placed upon it; I claim that it be baptised in My name; (2), and because the child is Mine, I require you, the parents and My Church, to teach it 'all things whatsoever I

have commanded you.' The child must be trained up not to please itself or its parents, but to please Me, in whom alone its life can attain its fulness; (3), and I promise that upon the baptised child I will 'sprinkle the clean water' of My Spirit symbolised in the baptismal water; for though the child's life has come from Me, the Father of Spirits, and is redeemed by Me, the Saviour of Sinners, yet coming into this life in the line of sinful flesh it is tainted with sin, so that without the cleansing grace of Me, the Spirit of Regeneration, it will not attain eternal life.

"Responding to these three points on the Divine side, there are three points on the human side of baptism. The parents and the Church in baptism-(1), acknowledge God's claim to the life of the child; they confess that the child in its true life belongs not to the parents, or to itself, but to God. And, therefore (2), they undertake to obey the precept to teach the child all things whatsoever God in Christ has commanded; the parents undertake to teach these things alike in the ordering of their home and in the formal teaching of the child, and the Church undertakes to teach these things in her services and classes; (3), and conscious of their weakness, parents and Church undertake this training of the child, humbly accepting and resting upon the promise of God to baptise the child with the Holy Spirit, who alone makes the teaching effective.

"In contrast with the other views of baptism, this view is called disciple's baptism, because it designates the person baptised, not as one who in baptism is regenerated, and not as one who previous to baptism has been regenerated, but as one who, being in the

Kingdom of God, is to be taught its truth, so that as its life unfolds he may appropriate the grace and gifts of the kingdom." Then the rite of circumcision and the like are referred to as bearing upon "the place of children in the kingdom of God," of all which we propose to treat in due course.

In the meantime, we shall make the following remarks:—

- (a) According to this theory, the child is supposed to be within the Kingdom of God, and yet neither regenerated before baptism nor regenerated in baptism, an unregenerated man-child within the Kingdom of God, one, therefore, by the first or the one natural birth, at one and the same time ushered into two totally different kingdoms, the kingdom of this world, and the kingdom of heaven, even that of which the Divine Teacher expressly and most solemnly declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again (or anew) he cannot see the Kingdom of God." This seems clearly to imply that there must at least be here some radical mistake; the words of the unerring Master being apparently directly contradicted by the words of the author of this theory. The true relation of children to the kingdom cannot well be discussed here; so that we shall only now remark that there must be some better way of dealing with the important relation in question, to which we hope to return.
- (b) Children being thus, when baptised, unregenerated disciples, by natural birth ushered into the spiritual kingdom, they cannot by any possibility be included in the terms of the commission; and that for a simple reason: the command is "Go, make disciples; baptising; teach-

ing," whereas if children are as the theory implies, disciples to be baptised, then they are not such disciples as the commission refers to; for these are such as are made by those so commissioned—"go, and make disciples"—whilst the children to be baptised as disciples are made disciples, not by man, but by the God who made them disciples in making them infant children. Of course it will not do to say, why, according to the theory of Dr. Halley and others, children are made disciples by baptising and teaching; and, therefore, they are made disciples by those commissioned by Christ; and that for two distinct reasons—first, this making of disciples by baptism, could not be the baptism of disciples; and, secondly, if children are made disciples by God and through natural birth, and recognised by man as such, and by this disciples' baptism, they ought to be treated as disciples and as within the kingdom of heaven, and so beyond the circle of the non-discipled, whom it is the part of the commissioned to do their utmost to make disciples. From first to last they are to be treated as disciples, and, as Dr. Goodrich most consistently tells us, are to be taught, not what people are to be taught, in order to discipleship-namely, the Gospel of Christ, but what Christ expressly declares is to be taught in order that they, as disciples, may observe the manifold duties of the Christian life.

(c) This leads us to call special attention to this very thing to which we have more than once alluded already. We are told that these young baptised disciples are to be taught by parents on the one hand, and by the Church on the other, all things whatsoever the Head of the Church has commanded His disciples to observe

—that is to say, not what is needed to make disciples, but what those made disciples are required to do. How this should have been so overlooked, so thoroughly unseen, in a case of such importance, seems no less than a mystery of exegetical misinterpretation.

(d) The main idea of this theory is that of the claim of the Creator as to the life of the creature. Certainly such a claim is rightful, but why it should require such a rite to make it in some sense visible, we cannot comprehend. In fact, we cannot comprehend the reason, or reasons, for what we deem the adoption of this theory of baptism, in the room of the baptism which is so simply set forth in the commission, and in the history of the fulfilment of it by the Apostles and others. We cannot but regard this theory in any other light than that of a pretty, ingenious, and finely expressed invention, by which all really Christian baptism is completely laid aside, and an expression of a mixture of religious truth and error, with no real interpretation of the commission, put in its place. Well may Dr. Goodrich, with such a theory in view, say, "Primer," p. 20, "But baptism is not of the great importance some Christians endeavour to make it." He would have made the sentence complete if he had only added, "In fact, with the above view of it, they might rather see in it no importance at all."

5th. — Broad Church View. We may go on to deal with the mistaken interpretation of the Apostolic commission generally, if not universally, supported by the above-named section of the Church of England, and for the most part, forming the basis of what we have been treating as a theological

theory, said to be "held, with some variations, by Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians." How far it has been thus adopted we are not prepared to say: we would suppose that very many of these yet put the greatest stress on the practice of circumcision as the main ground for what they would deem the fair -nay, the certain inference of that of infant baptism. Be this as it may, we do not mean to say that our Broad Church friends make that ancient rite do no service in the argument for infant baptism. We now only intend to deal with the branch of the argument based, like that just considered, on the relation of all children to the first Adam, through whom they suffered, on the one hand, and to the second Adam, by whom they must be viewed as receiving corresponding blessing, on the other. As to any other arguments, we simply refer to our separate treatment of them elsewhere. We may only add, that we may regard the views of the Rev. F. D. Maurice as all needed for our purpose.

Doubtless we ought to hold, with him and many others, that the relation of the second to the first Adam is vastly important, and cannot but have a most intimate, far-reaching, and mysterious connection with the whole structure and bearing of what we may call the Redemptive Providence of God, from first to last, on the entire human race, especially in view of the fact of the appointed, intimate, and all-embracing relationship of parent and child. Assuredly the father of the race was in some high sense representative of the race, whilst the Divine Redeemer could not but be, in like manner, also representative. As Paul expressly and luminously says:—"Nevertheless Death reigned from

Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of Him that was to come" (Romans v. 14)clearly implying that the constitution of the Divinely ordained relationship between the first Adam, or father of the race, and his posterity, and the like Divinely ordained relationship between the second Adam, or Saviour of the world, and all those for whom He lived and died, were in closest and most thoroughly interdependent relationship to one another. If Adam and his posterity had never fallen, they would all have been regarded as children of God, and treated as such by God and one another. Fallen as they are, they are still to be viewed as the children of God, assuredly under Divine and saving grace, through the redemption of the second Adam, and thus fully entitled to the gift of eternal life, and of all the blessings of the family of God and of the Kingdom of Heaven. Every child of man is thus a born heir of God, of Christ, and of that glorious Kingdom. But, whilst all without exception are thus heirs by birth, not one can at birth be said to be in sure and certain possession. It is one thing to be the born heir of a kingdom, and quite another to wear the crown; so it is one thing to be born heir to the Kingdom of God, and quite another to enter and take possession of it through the more than golden gate of a new and heavenly birth. For certain possession, the infant heir of an earthly estate must live, and in good time make good his claim. For certain possession, the infant heir of a Heavenly one must die in body and live by the spirit of life, if the inheritance would never possibly be lost. Hence the two great and infallible sayings of the Divine Teacher, "Of such is

the Kingdom of God," and "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God," and both in harmony with a third profound saying of His, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Thus far, then, we fully agree with Mr. Maurice and many others, as to the Headship of Adam on the one side, and as to the Headship of Christ on the other. But the inference drawn from all this as a ground or basis for the practice of infant baptism, we are far from prepared to admit, and that for such reasons as the following:—

(1.) Apart altogether from any view we may take of the relation of mankind to Christ or to God, we hold that the fact that we have no evidence of so much as one case of infant baptism being commanded by Christ or His Apostles in the New Testament, or even practised by them, or by any of their disciples for many years after, ought to suffice to demonstrate that no theological theory, no speculative argumentation whatever, can justly be admitted to weigh one grain in proof of infant baptism.

(2.) As the theory of Dr. Goodrich already dealt with, and this now considered, are essentially one and the same, we may justly say that all we have, we feel, successfully urged against the one, might be as success-

fully urged against the other.

(3.) We think we have said enough with respect to the first and second Adam and the human race, in reply to what Mr. Maurice has again and again said as to the Divine Fatherhood on the one hand, and as to the Kingdom which Christ came into the world to set up on the other. He strangely but expressly tells us, that if we fail to believe that we are children of God,

united to Christ, members of the Kingdom, "we are guilty of practising a perpetual lie," thus misrepresenting the Creator as not Father, and ourselves as not His children, and Christ as really no Saviour. Whilst thus maintaining, we find him quoting the very words of the Divine Teacher, already quoted for a different purpose, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," and to which we find immediately added, "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again." Thus, whatever the birth connection with Christ, we have Christ's own solemn declaration that it does not prevent the absolute necessity of a new or second birth; and this is true, whether we view the words of Christ as certainly referring to the new birth of the Holy Spirit and faith in Jesus Christ, as expressly pointed out in John i. 12, 13, or take the High Church, and, we hold, most irrational interpretation of them, as implying the most erroneous doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In either case, a new or second birth is certainly implied. But Mr. Maurice admits of no such birth, nor is any such consistent with his theory.

By way of further illustration, we may quote the following, "Kingdom of Christ," vol. i. p. 373, "If the Gospel be the revelation or unveiling of a mystery hidden from ages and generations, and if this mystery be the true constitution of humanity in Christ, so that a man believes and acts a lie who does not claim for himself union with Christ, we can understand why the deepest writings of the New Testament, instead of being digests of doctrine, are epistles, explaining to those who had been admitted into the Church their own position, &c." All this is fearfully vague; but it shows that for

any man to confess his want of a real and saving union with Christ or his desire to have such a union, is to put himself in a totally wrong position, and to seek a union which exists already and which he cannot but have already; his only sin being not that of failing to accept the Divine Gift of Christ, and thus to be actually united to Christ, but that of refusing to claim union to Christ as his already. In the same page he adds, "The fact of a union between the Godhead and humanity is thus set forth as the one which the Apostle felt himself appointed to proclaim, which was the ground of the message to the Gentiles, and in which all ideas of reconciliation, of Divine life, justification by faith, sanctification by the Spirit, were implicitly contained." We may truly say, yes, all in Christ when actually received by a living and life-giving faith, but not one of them so long as He is unknown, rejected or simply neglected by one, however mysteriously related to Christ, or however Christ may be mysteriously related to him. Whatever the ground of the message, the message itself was not, "You are all united to Christ, and therefore you are at once to believe, not in Him for salvation, but that you are saved already." beginning to end, the Bible sets forth the very reverse, that all are naturally without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world; and that all is darkness till Christ, the true light, shines, and till that light shines into the minds and hearts of the benighted children of men. The main point is, not whether the Kingdom is open to all, but being open to all, how are men to enter and so to become the genuine subjects and possessors of it. "I am the Door," says Christ Himself: "if any man enter in, he shall be saved." This is not exactly what,

according to Mr. Maurice, we might expect, but, "I am the Door: so that a man believes and acts a lie, who does not claim for himself to have entered and to be already saved." We are far from disposed to doubt the truth of his assertion, p. 381, "The idea of the Scriptures, as far as we have been able to trace it, is that Jesus Christ came upon earth to reveal a Kingdom, which Kingom is founded upon a union established in His person between man and God;" at least if he means, as he seems to mean, what Christ said, after the sublime confession of the Apostle Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," "I say unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." On that Rock, the Divine Humanity of Jesus, has He been building His Church ever since; and this very Apostle Peter himself, beautifully tells us in the infallible words of Isaiah, how this Church is to be raised, "Behold, I lay in Zion a Chief Corner Stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded." In the previous context, the same Apostle sets forth, with like force and beauty, the true erection of this Spiritual Temple,—"If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone. . . . Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Christ then, as the Son of God, the Divine and the human, the one great and glorious mystery, hid for ages, revealed in the last times, is indeed "the Everlasting Rock" on which the Church of all ages and generations is being built by the grace and the power of the Eternal Spirit, to the glory of the

Father, and of all those living stones, which that Spirit has made alive by the sole inspiration of faith in Jesus Christ; and all who are believed to believe in Him are alone believed by enlightened Christian Baptists to be intended by Christ, and according to His Apostolic Commission, to be the appointed subjects of Christian baptism.

SECTION IV.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN AND THAT OF CHRIST.

HERE we specially refer to the personal ministry of both. The subject is somewhat difficult, and we cannot here afford all the space which the full treatment of it would require. We begin with

I.—The Baptism of John.

We must not trace this rite to the Apostolic Commission; but, in a very important sense, to the Divine mission of the forerunner of Christ. All would do well carefully to study the unique position and mission, as well as character, of the Baptist. With the exception of the coming King, no one occupied so singular and exalted a place in Old Testament prophecy as the predicted Elijah, the herald of the promised King and Kingdom of the true Israel of God. Four hundred years had elapsed since the last of the prophets had closed the inspired record of ancient prophecy, by pointing to the coming of this wonderful Man, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Coming thus "in the spirit and power of Elijah," John belongs, strictly speaking, neither to the economy of the Old Testament nor to that of the New. He may be said to stand between the two; and, with the revelation of the past fully in mind, calling on all to prepare for the immediate coming of the Promise of the ages, and the beginning of the great expected future. Hence the special fitness of his message, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Deliverance from sin being the essential characteristic of the approaching reign, as a preparation, nothing could be more important than that thorough change of mind expressed by the words so often used, repent and repentance. John was no mere stern reformer, as he has been regarded. If his theme was repentance, it was "repentance for the remission of sins" and with the assurance that "the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand."

Hence the appropriateness of his baptism, an immersion in water; signifying a washing away of all sin, all pollution, the impartation of full forgiveness, and restoration to purity and life. Such symbolic use of water, so common in Old Testament times, might be fitly appointed by God, to a greater or less extent, for a like purpose, in all after times. It was so in the case of John and of Jesus, before the actual coming of the Kingdom, and in the case of Christ, the Apostles, and their followers, after that Kingdom had in reality come. We have said "of John and of Jesus;" because, during His personal ministry, Jesus uttered the same message, preached the same Gospel, announced the near approach of the same Kingdom, and, in this way and certainly with no less authority, haptised the same baptism. Let it be observed, we refer exclusively to the time when both preached precisely the same thing, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" for, though Jesus had come, He was yet, like John, only preparing the way

for the coming Kingdom.

Jesus had openly identified Himself with John, and acknowledged the Divine authority of his mission, by coming to him for baptism. The two missions were in no sense or way inconsistent, but, in every sense and way, one and the same mission. In making disciples of himself, John was really making disciples of Jesus, as we actually find some of the former going over to the latter, at the pointed allusion of the herald to the very Person of the yet only coming King. We repeat, then, the preaching was the same, the very words forming the texts of both were the same, the ministry of each was but temporary, and, when the kingdom actually had come, or after the Crucified had become the Risen Saviour-King, was designed to merge into that of the Apostles, and, with their common ministry, their common baptism was merged into the more significant and more intelligible, the universal and permanent baptism of the great commission.

We have just said that Jesus acknowledged the Divine authority of the mission and baptism of John; who, again, expressly set forth the real origin of that baptism, and so of that of Jesus before, and that of the Apostles after, the coming King and kingdom had actually come on the Day of Resurrection. When Jesus went to John for baptism, John at once felt the presence of the Master, and humbly pleaded his unworthiness, but the word of Jesus prevailed. This would seem hardly consistent with what we find in John i. 29–34, where we have the grand testimony of the herald to his King, yet where he seems incorrectly

to say, verses 33, 34, "and I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." The apparent incorrectness is unreal, John, indeed, felt the presence of Him, whom he, at a glance, could not fail inwardly to recognise; but such recognition, sure as it was, came far short of that knowledge, based on the express testimony of God, to which he here refers, "He that sent me . . . the same said to me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending . . . the same is He . . . and I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." He certainly knew Him now, because he saw the Divinely appointed sign, and so could fulfil his own office, by testifying, on the ground of this infallible assurance, and on that of no erring knowledge of his own, that Jesus was indeed "the Son of God." It will be seen that John in this fine testimony, expressly says 'He who sent him to baptise,' and so, who gave him a direct Divine commission to baptise. He thus practically declared that his baptism was of a totally different kind from every other, that, in fact, it was perfectly original, and that it was neither of himself nor of any human suggestion, but simply of God and God alone. Such, then, is the true Divine origin of the rite of Christian baptism. It is vain, therefore, to trace it to any Old Testament or supposed Proselyte baptism, however these may have made it the more suitable and intelligible to those accustomed to the frequent use of them. The order is very simple—the baptism of John, the baptism of Jesus. these of identical import and temporary use, and that of

the apostolic commission of like form, but of enlarged meaning and permanent obligation.

Whilst the identity of those before the actual coming of the kingdom cannot be well doubted by any, some have disputed the identity of that of the commission and that of John; and for this they appeal to Acts xix. 1-7," And it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was (given), (or, there is a Holy Ghost). And he said, Into what then were ye baptised? And they said, Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And they were in all about twelve men." The argument is, that this case of apparent re-baptism absolutely demonstrates that there were two distinct baptisms, or that the baptism of John could not possibly be the same as that of Jesus. We have, we think, fully shown that they were the same during the personal ministry of Jesus, or while, as Paul here distinctly indicates, John's baptism pointed to the coming of the Kingdom; and, we do not suppose that any of those baptised then by John or by Jesus, would be baptised over again by the Apostles, if they came forward as believers in Jesus as the Messiah, on the

ground of the testimony of either John or Jesus as to "Him who should come after," that is, as Paul adds, "on Jesus." But the case became very different, when, long after the King and Kingdom had actually come, the temporary baptism of John had ceased to be appropriate; and vet certain of John's disciples or of their followers, as apparently Apollos, continued to baptise "unto John's baptism;" with which alone, as we are told in the preceding chapter, Apollos was acquainted. These first Ephesian disciples, then, had not, any more than Apollos, a knowledge of the baptism of Faith in Jesus as already come, or as the King of the new and heavenly kingdom. If this point of difference to which Paul expressly alludes, had been noticed and kept in view, there need never have been the great controversy in which the celebrated Robert Hall and other distinguished Baptists so keenly engaged.

A few most important inferences seem now fairly to be suggested.

- (a) From the very nature of the ministry of John and of Jesus, with the special demand made on all whom they proposed to baptise, even repentance for the forgiveness of sins, we may most justly infer that adults and adults alone could possibly be the proper subjects of the preparatory baptism, who are expressly said to have received that baptism, "confessing their sins;" whilst all coming to the baptism are faithfully called upon to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance."
- (b) As to the mode or manner of this early baptism, whatever it was, we may most assuredly infer that it was one and the same in that of Jesus and of John alike. We do not here enter into the great contro-

versy which has so long and so persistently obtained as to this. We now go no further than this, and know of none who would contend for the reverse, that, if John can be proved to have practised immersion, Jesus, not personally, but by His disciples, must have practised immersion too; and, if so during His personal ministry, we cannot doubt of His doing the same by His apostles after His resurrection, and in keeping with the words of His apostolic commission. This will not be doubted by any who may carefully consider the fact that Jesus, before He left this world, was as wise as kind to teach His disciples, especially His chosen Apostles, by their as well as His own practice, how He intended them to observe both those simple, sublime, and sacred ordinances distinctive of His Church in every realm, and in every age, to the end of time.

Baptism and the Commemorative Supper.

(c) In carefully studying this transitional ministry of John and of Jesus we can hardly fail to observe the initial process by which the national religion of the Israel which was about to pass away was destined to be followed by the more personal religion of the Israel which was about to take its place. The call of both was directed to what pertained to the individual and purely spiritual. A complete change of heart and mind, and not to any merely outward change of life and conduct. They demanded no mere reformation, but a real and complete regeneration. Those who obeyed, and thus became new men, however of Israel and of the circumcision, were alone fit subjects of the new kingdom and of the new baptism. This process

went on. The unbelieving ceased to be the acknowledged people of God. The believing alone were so acknowledged; and when almost all had rejected their Messiah, as Paul most sorrowfully declares, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off and thou standest by faith." Faith, and not blood, now and for ever, connects with the new and true Israel of God.

In the meantime, let it be observed that John here expressly points to the real introduction of the baptismal rite. We are told of how, after the baptism of Christ, he was led to point to Christ personally, and to say, "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away (or, beareth) the sin of the world." We thus see how he conducted the work of preparing the way of the Lord, especially as we are further told that, vers. 35-37, "On the morrow John was standing, and two of his disciples; and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." These were John and Andrew, who at once, we may say, went over from John to Jesus, or, in keeping with the work of John, became the permanent disciples of Jesus. But, it may be asked, Why was John thus led directly and personally to Christ? John clearly and instructively tells us. He said, referring to the baptism of Jesus, and as we have been showing, vers. 30, 31, "This is He of whom I said, after me cometh a Man which is preferred before me; for He was before me. And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptising in water," that is to say, John did not at the first know Jesus personally, at least he did not know Him with the certain or infallible know-

ledge by which he was Divinely warranted to treat Him as the coming One; so that, up to the time of the baptism of Jesus, he did not thus know Him, and, therefore, could not and did not thus personally point to Him. In passing we may refer to what may appear contradictory to this, namely, that John seemed so to know Jesus as to express his own need to be baptised of Jesus. However, as John was fully certain that Jesus had actually come, we need not wonder to find that John at once saw in the very face and manner and speech of the stranger a perfect assurance of the fact that He could not but be the expected One. The expecting and the expected could not meet face to face without spiritually seeing eye to eye, and without the surest mutual recognition. Still, such recognition was not the appointed sign of infallible identity. And hence, it is added, "And John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not" (this is repeated, as above, to prepare for what follows as to the appointed proof), "but He that sent me to baptise in water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptiseth in the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." Now divinely and miraculously assured, John, as we have seen, directed attention to Jesus, and at the same time summed up the whole prophetic revelation in the few, but glorious words, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Such, then, was the mission, the baptism, the actual work of John the Baptist. All was peculiar. All was temporary.

When the kingdom actually came it was ended. Here we say kingdom and not King, and that, not because the King had not actually come, but because He had not yet completed the work on which was founded the kingdom and His real title to His kingly Throne. Before this, He could do no more than John—namely, preach the same Gospel, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and baptise, as yet, only the same baptism. This we shall see as we go on to treat of

II.—The Baptism of Jesus.

1st. As more than once alluded to, we are told, "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptising more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself baptised not, but His disciples)" (John iv. 1, 2). In passing, we may remark that these words are most suggestive, as throwing much light on the entire ministry and course of both John and Jesus. They suggest that many must be mistaken as to the numbers baptised by John, even almost the entire nation. They overlook the use of hyperbole in such expressions as "All Jerusalem." Again, we are here. as nowhere else, informed as to Christ baptising, vet only by His disciples. This, further, suggests the great probability of John employing his disciples in aiding himself in baptising the multitudes who came to his preaching, and thus making it the more easy to account for the immersion of such numbers. Once more, we have a clear proof of what not a few deny, that we interpret the Great Commission correctly when we hold that the real order is that of making disciples first and of baptising them next, as implied in

the order here expressed, "Jesus made and baptised," not "baptised and made." As already said, when anyone is spoken of as "baptised into or unto any person or thing, he is not thereby supposed to be instrumentally or conditionally connected with that person or thing;" but he is viewed as previously united to that person or possessed of that thing. Further, it has been well observed that the preposition here used is not $\dot{\epsilon}\nu$, in, or ϵi , unto or for, but $\epsilon \pi i$, with the dative, on; so that we may more correctly render, not in the name, but on the name, implying, as we find, Winer, "Gram." 411, "the foundation on which an action or state is conceived as placed;" so that the meaning might be thus expressed, "Repent ye and be baptised (resting or depending) on the name of Jesus Christ unto (or for) the remission of your sins." The people had been led to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and they are called upon to trust in Him for forgiveness or for salvation, and so to make an open acknowledgment of His Messiahship, by being openly baptised in His name.

We might have entered, as partially already, into a full proof of the principle, that, according to New Testament usage, to be baptised with water into any person or thing implies a previous connection with or possession of that person or thing. Thus it is with the expression, "Baptised into Jesus Christ," in which He is supposed to be known, trusted, accepted—so with "baptised into Moses," where Moses is supposed to be known and accepted as the appointed leader of Israel. Perhaps the words of Paul give the very best example and proof, "I thank God that I baptised none of you, save Crispus and Gaius; lest any man should say that ye were baptised into my name" (1 Cor. i. 14) (R.V.).

What could this mean? Paul could not possibly by any mystic influence of baptism unite them in any way to himself, but he might so baptise them that they might seem to be his disciples rather than disciples of Jesus Christ.

SECTION V.

PENTECOSTAL MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST.

WE have regarded the coming of the promised King and Kingdom as taking place in the day of the resurrection of Jesus, who then became King by Divine right on the ground of Divine Sonship on the one hand, and of His great sacrifice for the sins of the world on the other. In fact, His resurrection was His birthday as the Mediatorial King of the Mediatorial Kingdom of God. The company of His disciples now formed the nucleus of His kingdom. Again and again he appeared to these, and especially to His chosen Apostles; yet not in all the glory of His Majesty. He rather continued to carry on and to complete the precious preparatory work in which He had been previously engaged. The words, "The Spirit was not yet (given); because Jesus was not yet glorified," were still to be more amply fulfilled. For this His disciples had patiently to wait. How much they learned during this mysterious transitional period, we cannot know. Each wonderful visit would be a lesson of priceless value to every heart as well as mind. Throughout the whole time, and not alone at the first, would they find it hard to believe their eyes and ears for very joy. What a change came over them as well as over Him. They had become the noblest heroes among mankind.

Doubtless, meditation, prayer, and mutual converse distinguished every passing day. They would ponder deeply the lesson of the past, and talk freely of their relation to the work of the future. How they would rejoice as they were favoured with visit after visit! As we are told, "He showed Himself alive after His passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which (said he) ye heard from Me: for John indeed baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 3–5).

The Day of Pentecost came. The Spirit was miraculously and most marvellously given. Peter preached. Many were convinced, converted, "made disciples." Jesus was glorified in Jerusalem where He had been crucified; and this glorification by the Spirit on earth was an appointed and infallible proof of His glorification and coronation in heaven.

We now go on to treat of the passages illustrative of our subject. We begin with the great sermon of the Apostle Peter.

I. Acts ii. 36-41.—"Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Now, when they heard (this), they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter (said) unto them, Repent ye, and be baptised every one of you in (or upon) the name of Jesus Christ unto (or for) the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift," not of forgiveness

as some would have it, but that "of the Holy Ghost." All thus doing as the Apostle commanded are assured of the very richest gift of God through Jesus Christ, as only one of Divine authority could truly promise. We may well ask, To what does so vast and precious a gift amount? The words seem clearly to refer to the Holy Spirit Himself, even as spoken of in the Great Commission, "baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here, however, Peter doubtless referred, in the first place, to the words of the prophecy of Joel, which he had fully quoted; as also to those of Christ, ch. i. 5, "John indeed baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence;" and still further to those of the Baptist, "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me . . . shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and (with) fire" (Matt. iii. 11). Thus this baptism of the Spirit was promised in ancient prophecy, by the herald of Jesus, by Jesus Himself, as here by the Apostle. The grand crisis in the redemptive history was again and again declared to be specially distinguished by a ministry of the Holy Spirit, trans-cending all past ministration of that Spirit in the progressive work of human redemption. We are accustomed to regard the gift or gifts here alluded to as either ordinary or extraordinary; both, I am persuaded, being here intended. The people saw with their eyes and heard with their ears the wonderful effects of the presence and power of the promised Spirit. The time was extraordinary, and the gifts were in great measure extraordinary. But all would have been vain unless the internal, the permanent,

the life-giving and life-sustaining grace of the Divine Spirit had been fully bestowed on all here becoming disciples and being baptised in or on the name of Jesus Christ. Though this gift seems directly connected with the baptism, we are rather to regard it as promised to all who acted according to the entire requirement of the Apostle, repenting, accepting the Messiah, as to whom they had implicitly expressed their belief, and, in token of their acknowledgment of Him, were baptised in or on His name. In keeping with this we may here merely add, that, as clearly set forth throughout the New Testament writings, it is a great, and, we may say, a most glorious law of the kingdom of saving grace, that wherever Christ enters the heart by faith, the Spirit of life in Him invariably and infallibly enters along with Him; so that all Christians are absolutely and entirely dependent on Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for their present and eternal salvation.

"For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all that are afar off, (even) as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." Here the "for" clearly connects the promised gift of the Holy Spirit with obedience to the authoritative command of the Apostle. As we have just pointed out, he had expressed no new assurance of his own, nor even of Christ or of the Baptist, but of Joel, an old prophet who most wonderfully spoke as he had been infallibly moved by the Holy Spirit, and as he had been, with unerring correctness, just quoted by the inspired Apostle. The real promise, then, expressly spoken of was that of Joel; and this we must carefully keep in view, if we would clearly comprehend the meaning of the

speaker. Too often has this been virtually overlooked, if not set aside, and some other substituted for it. Let us mark the Apostle's words, ver. 15-21, "These are not drunken, as ye suppose . . . but this is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy... and on My servants and on My handmaidens in those days will I pour forth of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy . . . And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Here, says Peter, we have the fulfilment of this old Divine prediction and most precious and faithful promise, which we find repeated over and over again, in reality, if not in very form, as we have also found, by the Baptist and by his and our unerring Teacher. Let all, then, who welcome the crucified and risen Messiah, and who confess His Messiahship by being baptised in His name, mark how the promise is to them and to all who come to resemble them. In simplest words, the prophet expressly says that, "it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." However, it will be noted that, in this 39th verse, it is not thus said, but that the promise is to "as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." Both are alike true, as only those will call on the name of the Lord who have been previously called "by the Lord our God." How grand this testimony of the Apostle! We have the first and the typical fulfilment of the Apostolic Commission: Discipleship, Baptism, Teaching Christian Obedience, as we find it immediately added, "and they," the baptised, "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and

fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (R.V.).

All this seems clearly and certainly to refer to such as are capable of hearing and receiving the Gospel of Jesus, and as actually become disciples by so doing. Not one word of promise is here said to relate to any who either could not or would not so hear, and so become disciples of Jesus Christ. Whatever may be elsewhere said of infant children, there will be found in this passage no reference to such, however true and excellent Christians their parents may be. The Scriptures abundantly supply all that can be desired as to their position, privileges, and best interests by the most tender and anxious parental affection, far more so than can or could be expressed by any baptism which did not imply or convey such spiritual good as should in after years prove its undoubted reality by some distinctive superiority of the baptised to the unbaptised children of like Christian parents. Yet it has been long, and is still maintained, by many most learned and excellent Christians, that the precious promise is here said to be to the infant children of believing parents as well as to themselves — "The promise is to you and to your children." This is regarded as identical with the older Abrahamic promise, "And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee" (Genesis xvii. 7). We cannot here treat of this covenant, but will deal with it when we come to consider the distinctive nature of the Abrahamic and Christian dispensation. Only, as we have already seen, we repeat that the prophecy or

promise of Joel, to which the inspired Apostle alludes, is by no means that to Abraham, but is most clearly and conclusively proved by him to be, we may say, totally different, as His words certainly convey-"The promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, (even) as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." Set aside this last and limiting clause, and the other words might include the whole world - infants and old men, converted and unconverted, Jew and Gentile alike. Restore it, and it includes all true believers and excludes all else, from the oldest man to the youngest child. Whatever may be said of infant children elsewhere, here at least is to be found no reference to them at all. Though this sentence has been held and held forth to be a very stronghold of infant baptism, how could any sentence be framed to express more decisively, though indirectly, the apostolic rejection of infant baptism?

What, then, is meant by "the promise is to your children," if they do not at least include their very youngest children? To learn we have simply to turn to the prophecy, and there we shall find, "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. . . . And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (or delivered); for," as Joel adds, "in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance (or, R.V., 'those that escape'), as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call," just as Peter here says, "(even) as many as the Lord our God shall call."

All this is in perfect keeping with what Peter here

does and had elsewhere previously done. Here not one thing is said, or then or afterwards done, as to the baptism of the infant children, erroneously supposed to have been alluded to. Nor do we find a single case of the actual baptism of an infant child throughout the whole history of "the Acts of the Apostles," or of the evangelistic work of any of their fellow-labourers in any portion of the New Testament writings, nor in any writing by any Christian, for, here to say the very least, many years after the last apostolic work of any kind was ended. But this is not all. We must not forget that Peter and the others were accustomed to baptise the disciples of Jesus before they received the great commission, or were thus engaged in the fulfilment of it; as we have already pointed out, "Jesus was making and baptising more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself baptised not, but His disciples)." They, then, baptised as well as John the Baptist, and had a commission so to do as truly Divine and authoritative as his. We are also assured from the very nature of the baptism itself, that no infant or young child was ever baptised by either; and, besides this consideration, we have what we may call a further infallible proof, due to a passage which has been used for ages as, we may say, an infallible proof of the very doctrine of infant baptism—we refer to that of the bringing of young children, not to be baptised, but to be blessed, by the Divine and tender-hearted Saviour. When they were brought to Him, what did these apostles, accustomed to baptise, but even to rebuke those who brought them? If such children had been baptised, or regarded as having a right to baptism. would the disciples have ever so acted? or would

Christ have, for the first time, seen any reason for saying what has so often and so long been regarded, however erroneously, as implying a title to infant baptism? The real force of His words we may again consider. In the meantime, we simply view them as showing that the Apostles did not baptise infants before they received the great commission, that that commission did not refer to any but those previously made disciples, and that we have, as we have said, no mention of any case of infant baptism for more than a century after this great sermon was preached.

"They then that received his words were baptised; and there were added (unto them) in that day about three thousand souls." This mighty result has proved the wonder and the comfort of all after times. To this day, amidst all the difficulties and despondencies attending the conversion of the entire world to Jesus Christ, this glorious triumph ought to inspire the most perfect confidence in the Holy Spirit as the almighty agent by whom the whole shall yet be accomplished.

However, we shall only allude to the bearing of these words on the second branch of the baptismal question, that of the mode, the immersion of believers. It has been often and strongly urged that so vast a number could not have been so baptised in one day, and within the walls of Jerusalem. In reply to this, much has been often said which, we think, ought to suffice. It has been rightly said that no real difficulty could arise because of the want of abundant water within the city. Then there could, with the Apostles and as many added to them as could be desired, be lacking no sufficient agents for the purpose. If we were to enter into details, let five and twenty be so employed, and this would give to each one hundred and twenty to baptise; and practically it has been found that all could be done within the space of a couple of hours. But, let four hours be spent, by no means necessarily consecutively; and then service after service might be devoutly held, and all accomplished without difficulty and without unseemly haste.

However, we have long thought that the words, not of Peter, but of Luke, cannot prove that all were baptised in one day, or on the very day of their conversion. The historian of the Acts wrote long after the events. Looking back, he would naturally connect the baptism with the conversion, and so refer to it as immediately following it: but he does not say that it, in all cases, so followed. Suppose all was most leisurely and conveniently done, and even not a few days used in doing it. Thus seen at a distance, there would be no impropriety in the words employed, "then they that received his words were baptised." The words which follow tell simply of the number added to the previous disciples of Jesus Christ added on that day, and through that one discourse. This might be easily illustrated. Let any preacher, Baptist or Pædobaptist, visit some town or village, and so speak that many are led to believe; let some of the inhabitants be thus added to the Church of the place, and let others be added at different dates to the same: nay, let it be found that others had united themselves to other Churches; and finally, let it be discovered that all, say one hundred, had been converted on the same day, and by the same discourse, and who would doubt the propriety of the words, that the hundred had been added on that

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day, or by that discourse, to the Church or to their Lord.

Be this as it may, there can be no real argument against the appointed practice of immersion, based on the number here said to have been added to the disciples of Jesus Christ.

SECTION VI.

FURTHER APOSTOLIC FULFILMENT OF THE GREAT COMMISSION.

I.—Ministry of Philip.

WE are next led to consider the great work of "making and baptising disciples" by the preaching of Philip in the city of Samaria, where "multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did." They had given heed to Simon, the sorcerer, and had been deluded by him, "but when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women" (Acts viii. 12). Here we have the great commission fulfilled — discipleship first, baptism next. They believed and were baptised, "both men and women," no third party, no infant children.

Still, besides those thus believing and being baptised, we are told of a wonderful and sad case of baptism, preceded with apparently like belief, that of Simon himself. Very much has been said of this baptism, as if it were most mysterious and perfectly unique. It need not be so regarded by any who keep by the Divinely appointed and most, nay, only natural order of Scripture, faith or regeneration first and baptism next, and not

baptism first and regeneration by baptism next. Certainly the latter is sure to land all who hold it in a mist of obscurity, if not of total darkness, as we might quote from Sadler's "Second Adam and the New Birth" abundant material to show. We have here no very rare exception of belief as to much about Christ, and yet apart from real faith in Christ or sincere and truehearted acceptance of Him. A good and most ample profession of Christian discipleship may be made; and every reason for baptism may clearly appear; and yet all may not be right, and the baptised afterwards prove to be self-deceived, and even, most sadly, to be like Simon, "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." Peter saw that Simon was in a most fearful spiritual condition; but, in counselling him to "pray to the Lord," he does by no means pronounce his case to be utterly hopeless.

II.—Philip and the Eunuch.

In the same chapter we find another instance, and that a most interesting and instructive one, of believing or discipling and baptising, according to the apostolic commission. We refer to that of "a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethopians, who had come to Jerusalem to worship; and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah." He could not have been reading a more suitable portion of that Christ-revealing Book. The agency of Philip was again employed. Enlightenment, faith, discipleship followed. Immediately he, evidently after unrecorded instruction, said to Philip, "Behold (here is) water; what doth hinder me to be

baptised? And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the cunuch; and he baptised him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the cunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing."

1st. Such is the revised version, in which the 37th verse of the authorised is omitted, as not being found in the best MSS., and so treated as an early interpolation. As Alford says, "The authorities against this verse are too strong to permit its insertion. It appears to have been one of those remarkable additions to the text of the Acts, common in D (which is here deficient) and its cognates: few of which, however, have found their way into the received text. This was made very early, as Irenæus has it. The manuscripts which contain it vary exceedingly: another strong mark of spuriousness in a disputed passage." The verse runs thus, "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Meyer says, "this is wanting in decisive witnesses; and in those which have the words there are many variations of detail. . . . It is nothing else than an old addition for the sake of completeness." We cannot of course use words of such doubtful genuineness for any argumentative purpose. Baptists have used them as a proof, that faith was so demanded before baptism, that only those capable of faith and actually possessed of it, were viewed as proper subjects of Christian baptism; in this way to the exclusion of infant children. We have never been able to admit the force of this, as evangelical Pædobaptists would hold that of those capable of faith, only such as could make

a profession of it had a right to be baptised. For the exclusion of infants, this passage is not needed, the evidence is abundant elsewhere; we do not, then, regard the genuineness of the words as of any polemical consequence. Still, we confess that they have appeared to commend themselves somewhat strongly by the very "completeness," for the sake of which Meyer considers they were "nothing else than an old addition." Certainly without them the passage does look incomplete. The eunuch is made to say, "Behold (here is) water; what doth hinder me to be baptised?" Then, without any answer, it is said, "and he commanded the chariot to stand still," &c. If the words are an addition, they have at least been wonderfully ingeniously framed to fit the place which so seemed to need them. As they must have been so early as to be quoted by Irenæus, the practice of adding to the genuine text must have begun nearer the apostolic age than we would like to believe. On the supposition of an interpolation, we may find that the verse is even more expressive of ecclesiastical meaning than on that of its genuine authority.

2nd. In the meantime we shall go on to treat of the baptism; the eunuch "commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptised him. And when they came up out of the water," &c. Here the main point of difference relates to the mode of baptism. If we accept the judgment of the learned authors of the Revised Version, we cannot well doubt that immersion was practised at this time and place at least. They have rendered the prepositions, ϵl s and $\epsilon \kappa$, into and out of as, in this case, alone proper; thus

virtually deciding the matter of the right and only translation. Apart from the consideration of the relation of these prepositions to one another, and of the circumstances of the case, els might be rendered to or into; and ex, from, and they have been so, in order to escape the seemingly certain inference of immersion. We have no wish to use this passage for a controversial purpose, as it is really not needed, and as we are assured that no one well acquainted with the evidence would doubt the correctness of the Authorised as well as the Revised Version. We need hardly repeat what has been so often and so fitly said of their unnecessarily leaving the chariot and going down, be it to or into the water, if only a small quantity was required, which was sure to be at hand and at any time available for any passing use. The eunuch must, in such a case, have known that he had no need to wait for sufficient means, and was not at all likely to have exclaimed, seemingly with delight, "Behold, water; what doth hinder me to be baptised?"

3rd. We may now complete our remarks on the supposition of an interpolation, in which case we think it is very far from being of no ecclesiastical value. The author or authors must have had some real object in adding it to the sacred text. We can hardly suppose, with Meyer, that they did so merely for the sake of completeness, unless we also suppose that they desired to fill up the supposed deficiency by supplying what they knew to be the usual practice of the Apostles and in Apostolic times, or to be the practice in their own, if post-apostolic, days. In either case we have their testimony, and that the more important, if post-apostolic, with respect to the fact of a demand of a confession of

Christian faith in order to Christian baptism. If infant baptism had been practised, and that universally or only commonly at the date supposed, we cannot imagine such an interpolation to have been so much as thought of. Thus far it is certainly of more weight against the practice of infant baptism, than the words could be if held to be genuine. Especially would they be absolutely fatal to any doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, whether infant or adult.

SECTION VII.

GENTILES INTRODUCED INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Our next example of apostolic Christian baptism we find in Acts x. 1-48, in which we find the clear and instructive record of the opening of the door of faith and salvation to the Gentile world. The keys had been promised by Christ to Peter at or about the other Cæsarea, Cæsarea Philippi, and were now put into his hands. When Peter made his grand confession that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the Living God," whilst Jesus declared that on the Rock set forth in that confession, He would build His Church, assuredly on Himself, the only real or possible Foundation on which it could be built, then he added, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." We have referred to this power already, and shown that we are told of the like power being given to all the other Apostles; only Peter, we find, was specially chosen and honoured to use these keys-first. to open the door to the Jewish nation at large, and next, as here, to open the door to the Gentile world.

I.—Cornelius.

1st. We need not quote the story of the peculiar

preparation of Cornelius, a centurion, who, Gentile as he was, is expressly said to be "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house;" while he is as expressly assured, "Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God." He seems thus to be regarded by Him who knows all hearts, to be an Israelite indeed, if not by race, at least by Divine and renewing grace; and not himself alone, but also "all his house," an expression which has entered largely into the baptismal controversy. We simply note in passing that thus we have to deal, as in this case, again and again, with believing households as well as baptised households; so that, at the outset, we might dismiss all such statements as of no significance or argumentative value in this controversy, unless it can be positively proved that there were young children among the actually baptised. In fact, we might here add as the more decisive, that the words, "with all his house," whether used of belief or of baptism, can of themselves prove neither the presence nor absence of any very young children. All is a matter of linguistic usage. Thus, if we knew of a family of which all the members capable of believing were actually or evidently believers, whilst one or two of the youngest were incapable of believing, we could say, in common parlance, and with sufficient propriety, that such was a believing family. The person addressed might be aware of the fact of such incapability, yet never for one moment misunderstand or misconstrue the words employed. So also, if a family was spoken of as a baptised household, the language used would by no means of necessity imply that, if there were very young children, they, too, must have been baptised. It is of consequence to keep

this in view if we would reason with logical correctness when dealing with this branch of the controversy.

2nd. Not only was Cornelius Divinely directed to send for Peter: Peter himself and the Church required a special Divine testimony as to the future treatment of Gentile believers. Hence the peculiar and expressive vision of the Apostle, by which he was taught, as he had never learned before, to set aside the old "wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile, and henceforth that he "should not call any man common or unclean." He accordingly went, as he was asked; and, in speaking of Christ, in reality while preaching the Gospel to all whom Cornelius had called together, "his kinsmen and his near friends, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. And they of the circumcision who believed were amazed, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptised in (here, not into) the name of Jesus Christ."

3rd. The main, perhaps the only point to be yet referred to is the fact of the contrast between the baptism of the Spirit in this case given before the baptism of water, and that of the Spirit, as in other cases, given after that baptism. This has often, and, we think, very needlessly, been made a point of great difficulty, nay, of real mystery. We rather regard all as clear and plain. As we have said, Peter and the Church stood in need of authoritative instructions as to the new or Christian treatment of Gentile believers,

who might not have previously conformed to the law of Moses. By bestowing this miraculous gift, and so putting no difference between Gentile and Jewish believers, Peter saw clearly his proper position and apostolic duty, and so commanded them to be baptised "in the name," or by the authority, "of Jesus Christ."

II.—Disciples at Derbe.

We may here notice, though baptism is not mentioned, the narrative of apostolic work as we find it in chapter xiv. 21-23. As Paul and Barnabas prosecuted their arduous and perilous missionary labours, on coming to Derbe, we are told that "when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had made many disciples"-" had discipled many," the very word used in the apostolic commission, and showing the real way in which disciples were made—"they returned to Lystra," where they had been shamefully treated, "and to Iconium and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed." The grand thing here spoken of was the Gospel preached, discipleship brought about, whilst baptism, which doubtless in all cases followed, is not so much as mentioned, as it would have been sure to be if it had been deemed of such supreme importance as it must have been always and everywhere, if it had been the means of what no preaching of the Gospel and no faith in Jesus Christ could possibly

effect, even that regeneration without which no man could be "made a disciple," or, as Jesus has declared, "could enter the kingdom of God," the kingdom to which reference had just been made.

III.—Lydia.

The passage to which we are next led to direct our attention, we find in Acts xvi. 11-15. When at Troas, Paul was directed by a vision of "a man of Macedonia" to cross over from Asia to Europe, and thus to become a far greater conqueror than Alexander the Great, after crossing over from Europe to Asia. "Setting sail, therefore, from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a (Roman) colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days. And on the Sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spake unto the women which were come together. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. And when she was baptised, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide (there). And she constrained us."

1st. We need not say that this case of "Lydia and her household" has long and often been used as if illustrative, if not demonstrative, of the supposed apostolic practice of infant baptism. Lydia alone is LYDIA. 93

expressly said to have "heard" and "given heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul," or alone to have been "made a disciple;" and yet it is said, "when she was baptised, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come ye into my house and abide there." All, it is argued, proving that that household. being baptised on the ground of her faith alone, as is assumed, must have consisted of young children, as such alone could be baptised on the ground of another's faith. Of course this proceeds on the supposition that this household could not have consisted of adults, and could not have been made disciples also before her baptism; and so as to be baptised along with her. As we read of believing households, why should we not expect to read also of baptised households? Certainly, the immediately following case of a household baptism, that of the jailer, was also a case of the conversion of the whole house or family, nay, of all who were in his house. Why should we not suppose the same was the case with the household of Lydia, not unlikely brought about by the earnest and faithful agency of Lydia herself, especially as we have not a hint of Lydia having so much as a single child? In fact, all is taken for granted. Nothing is proved. It has been said that we cannot prove that there were no infants in these families. However, the burden of proof lies with those who maintain that there were, and also that they were baptised. Till this is done, most assuredly no one has a right to conclude, from any number of baptised families, that the Apostles ever practised infant baptism. This narrative, then, simply proves nothing with respect to it. In fact, all fits in with the idea of a lady, away from her home, engaged in a prosperous business, more likely with a household of servants than with a family of her own, these servants trusted because of the same religious spirit, and thus greatly under the influence of their mistress. Her house she could call her own. She was faithful to the Lord, not only as believing in Him but possibly in her seeking and bringing about, and that at once, the welfare of her household by leading them to Jesus as she had been led by Paul and his companions. We do not say that such was actually the case. We simply show how the narrative may be illustrated as easily, and we think with more plausibility, on such a supposition as we have made than on any other suggestion of infant baptism.

2nd. We might quote the following from one or two of our learned Pædobaptist authorities: we find Meyer setting aside all inference of infant baptism. He says: "Of what members her family consisted cannot be determined. This passage, and verse 33, with xviii. 8, and 1 Cor. i. 16, are appealed to to prove infant baptism in the Apostolic age, or at least to make it probable. . . . But on this question, the following remarks are to be made: (1) If, in the Jewish and Gentile families which were converted to Christ, there were children, their baptism is to be assumed in those cases. when they were so far advanced that they could and did confess their faith in Jesus as the Messiah; for this was the universal, absolutely necessary qualification for the reception of baptism; compare also verses 31. 32, 33, xviii. 8. (2) If, on the other hand, there were children still incapable of confessing, baptism could not be administered to those to whom that, which was the

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necessary pre-supposition of baptism for Christian sanctification, was still wanting. (3) Such young children, whose parents were Christians, rather fell under the point of view of 1 Cor. vii. 14, according to which, in conformity with the view of the Apostolic Church, the children of Christians were no longer regarded as ακάθαρτοι, but as άγιοι, and that not on the footing of having received the character of holiness by baptism, but as having part in the Christian άγιότης by their fellowship with their Christian parents. Besides, the circumcision of children must have been retained for a considerable time among Jewish-Christians, according to xxi. 21. Therefore (4) the baptism of the children of Christians, of which no trace is found in the N.T. (not even in Eph. vi. 1, in opposition to Hofmann), is not to be held as an Apostolic ordinance . . . as, indeed, it encountered early and long resistance; but it is an institution of the Church, which gradually arose in post-apostolic times in connection with the development of ecclesiastical life and of doctrinal teaching, not certainly attested before Tertullian, and by him still decidedly opposed, and, although already defended by Cyprian, only becoming general after the time of Augustine in virtue of that connection." No Baptist could give a more decided or exact testimony as to the nature and post-apostolic origin and gradual introduction and slow progress of the practice of infant baptism. As Meyer correctly observes, "it is an institution of the Church."

In close connection with this we may quote the following from Alford: "It may be (as Meyer maintains) that no inference for infant baptism is hence deducible. The practice, however, does not rest on

inference, but in the continuity and identity of the covenant of grace to Jew and Christian, the sign only of admission being altered." On this we simply remark, that Alford here gives up, like Meyer, the baptism of a household viewed as a proof of Apostolic infant baptism, and falls back on the Abrahamic covenant as our real warrant for it. Alford thus, as well as Meyer, puts no argumentative force on any such record of household baptisms. As to the Covenant of Grace, on which he does put weight, we have so far referred to it already, and hope to treat it more fully in due course. We think we have sufficiently dealt with what he adds: "The Apostles, as Jews, would have proposed to administer baptism to the children, and Jewish or proselyte converts would, as matter of course, have acceded to the proposal; and that the practice thus by universal consent, tacitly (because at first unquestioned) pervaded the universal Church, can hardly, with any reason, be doubted (see Note on 1 Cor. vii. 14)."

On this we may add—first, Possibly the Apostles, as Jews, if left to their own Jewish ideas, might have done as here suggested; but, as pointed out elsewhere, they had learned directly from the Master, and by their own practice, whom they were to baptise—not Jewish proselytes and their children, but those made disciples, or Christians, through faith in Jesus Christ. Nay, further, and secondly, as Meyer reminds us of the fact that Jewish Christians continued, for a considerable time, to circumcise their children, they would not so much as think of having them, at the same time, circumcised and baptised; nor would the Apostles ever think of such a thing as infant baptism, at least so

long as they saw that infant circumcision continued to be practised. Thirdly, Alford assumes what Meyer denies as to 1 Cor. vii. 14 having a relation to baptism, and consequently maintains "that the practice thus, by universal consent, pervaded the universal Church;" and yet never so much as once appeared, as the words of Meyer more correctly, nay, alone correctly, state, for ages after the last of the Apostles had ceased to preach or baptise.

We shall yet quote from the Commentary of Webster and Wilkinson, "her household. This instance, that of the jailor's family (v. 33), and that of Stephanus (1 Cor. i. 16), together afford a strong presumptive argument in favour of infant baptism. (Cf. xxi. 5.)" We shall only remark that only these three cases, not separately or independently, but "together," are said to afford any proof, and that only "a strong presumptive argument in favour of infant baptism." If not one of the three, taken singly, can so prove, why should the three so succeed?

IV.—Jailor of Philippi.

Closely following the case of the conversion and baptism of Lydia, we are led to consider that of the conversion of the Jailor of Philippi and his household. The whole of the narrative of this chapter is full of interest and instruction. The most important of all questions asked by the awakened jailor, and answered by the Apostle, has proved wonderfully influential for good to countless multitudes of men, nay, of all classes, the learned as well as the ignorant, the most highly civilised as well as barbarous, externally the most

virtuous, no less than the most degraded and wicked. How wonderful the change of heart and life in the instance of this evidently rough and unfeeling man! "What must I do to be saved?" Some have been at a loss to know how such a question could enter the mind of such an one. It seems forgotten that he may have seen Paul and his companions pointed out from day to day "as the servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation," words which the Divine spirit might, amidst the terrors of the earthquake and accompanying circumstances, well apply to the mind and conscience of all connected with them. The answer has been a clear light shining in a dark place to many a benighted wanderer from God, in dread and danger of endless destruction. "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house."

1st. In relation to the proper treatment of the baptism of young children on the ground of the faith of their parents, we would do well to note the peculiarity of the form of this answer: "Thou shalt be saved. thou and thy house." If we keep by the exact form of these words, we must conclude that Paul assures the jailor of the salvation, not of himself alone, but of his whole family, on the sole condition of his own personal faith. We say so, simply to show that the salvation of this family would appear to depend as much on the faith of its head as the baptism of Lydia's family is held to be based on her faith alone. What is the cause of this? Simply that Luke uses a brief and pregnant mode of expression, or does not fill up the whole statement, as, for the sake of unmistakeable completeness. he might have done: "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved; and let thy house also believe, and they too shall be saved."

2nd. There ought to be no controversy as to this The words of the writer ought to suffice undoubtingly to determine. After the answer is given to the inquirer himself, it is added: "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house," preaching, doubtless, to all the same Gospel, explaining to all what they required to understand. He and they, as we are told, proved themselves true disciples, and therefore fit subjects for baptism; and thus he "was baptised, he and all his, straightway." Hence the happy change experienced by all without exception: "And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." If we had had no more than the mere words, "And was baptised, he and all his, straightway," there might have been no end to argument as to whether any infant had been among the baptised; but where we are so expressly told that all were alike taught; that all alike rejoiced, believing in God; we need not wonder at the assurance that all were alike baptised.

V.—Crispus.

In the 18th chapter we are told of a very instructive and interesting case of a believing household, that of Crispus, the Chief Ruler of the Synagogue of Corinth, who is said to have "believed on the Lord with all his house," and yet none of them are expressly said to have been baptised; only what follows clearly implies that they, as well as many others, would

certainly be so: "And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptised."

VI.—Disciples at Ephesus.

We come now to a most interesting incident in the history, that of Paul's first visit to Ephesus, and his first interview with a few Christians who seem to have been converted by Apollos before his more full Christian enlightenment; when he knew only "the baptism of John;" and when he seems, at so late a time, to have baptised with the baptism of John, with which these disciples were alone acquainted. We have already treated of this subject, and may add only the following: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper country, came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples," &c. (chap. xix. 1-7). Elsewhere we have considered this passage in relation to the question of the practical identity of the baptisms of John and of Jesus, during the personal ministry of the latter. Here that identity seems to be disproved by this fact of a second baptism. It does seem strange that the baptism of John should have been continued so long after his death, and after the apostolic commission had been given. However, in those days, when intercommunication must often have been so difficult and so slow, changes due to the gradual unfolding of Christian truth may have been for years hardly known, and imperfectly acted on; and thus, as in the case before us, the disciples of John, going to distant provinces, may have failed to become acquainted with the more advanced doctrines and practices of early apostolic times. Hence such a case as that of Apollos and these imperfectly instructed disciples, who knew only "the baptism of John."

As John, the herald of Christ, had to do mainly with Jesus viewed as yet to come, it could not but be that his baptism would soon cease to be appropriate; would, in fact, cease to be a real baptism at all. As Paul here says, John rightly directed his hearers to exercise faith in Him who was about to come. Now people were called upon to believe in Him who had already come. In this way Paul taught these disciples to call on Him who had already come, and to expect the promised gifts of the Holy Ghost, which often followed baptism into the name of Christ. These gifts were intended for the confirmation of the believing, and for the conviction and conversion of others. Hence we are told that "they were baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

VII.—Conversion and Baptism of Saul.

There yet remains another passage to which we would call attention—Acts xxii, 12-16—in which we are reminded of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and of the address to him of Ananias. After miraculously opening his eyes, "he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from His mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for Him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name." We might here pause and contemplate this wonderful change on the part of one who had so recently been perhaps the direct foe that ever was, before or after, of Christ and His Gospel. The greatest sinner has become the greatest saint, or, at least, is soon destined to become such. His blindness was a type of the total darkness of his mind. The miraculous opening of his eyes was a like type of his wonderful introduction into the marvellous light of Jesus Christ.

But what of these words of Ananias? Do they imply the possibility of any washing away of sin by means of any "baptism" in water, any application of any material substance to the person of any man whatever? The mere words seem to some to do so, or, at least, to imply such a condition as to lead them to find in them a basis for the doctrine of the baptismal remission of sin—a doctrine, we may say, contrary to the whole spirit and scope of Scripture. The figurative or symbolic meaning of baptism is entirely overlooked. What, then, are we to regard Ananias as meaning? Here Paul is represented as at once a passive subject and an active agent—the former in being simply baptised, the latter in washing away his sins. The baptism sets forth symbolically that very washing, virtually God's act of forgiveness. In yielding himself up to baptism the baptised believes in the forgiveness so symbolised; but, in so doing, he does what is the real condition of forgiveness, "he calls on the name of the Lord,"—he, resting in Christ as the foundation of his faith, and whilst being baptised, confesses his sins, accepts forgiveness, as here said "washes away his sins;" as, without further baptism, he ever continues

to confess and to call on the name of the Lord, and so to "wash away his sins."

We have now, we trust, carefully considered the various and instructive instances of Christian Baptism historically set forth in the Acts of the Apostles; and we think we can see no trace of the baptism of anyone, old or young, who was not supposed to have been previously "made a disciple" of Jesus Christ. From the beginning to the end of the history, all seems to proceed on the principle of the Great Commission, "Go ye and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

SECTION VIII.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM AS INDICATED IN THE APOSTOLIC EPISTLES.

In these epistles there could not fail to occur such references to Christian Baptism as must more or less clearly indicate the meaning attached to the ordinance in the minds of the various writers. As yet we may safely maintain that no passage in the Gospels or in the Acts can be found directly giving us either a precept or an example of infant baptism. At the very least it cannot be denied that this must be acknowledged to be strange in the extreme, if, indeed, such baptism had been so regarded and practised during so long a period, as it has been regarded and practised for so many ages, and by almost all professing Christians. We now go on to inquire how far these Apostolic writings, addressed to none but baptised people, may be found to indicate views of baptism or principles on which may be based a fair inference or argument for a doctrine of infant baptism. The first passage used for this purpose to which we would refer, we find in

I. Romans iv. 3, 9-12.—"What saith the Scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. . . . Is this blessing, then, pronounced upon the circumcision, or upon the uncircum-

cision also? for we say, To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness. How then was it reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision: and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned also unto them; and the father of circumcision to them who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that (the) faith of our father, Abraham, which he had in uncircumcision."

1st. This long quotation is of real importance, and will require pretty full consideration as having long had a prominent place in the Baptismal Controversy, and as being, in the view of very many, quite demonstrative of the doctrine of infant baptism. As such we would, therefore, endeavour to set forth, as clearly and decidedly as we can, the argument based upon it. The first and main idea is that of the relation of Abrahamic circumcision to Christian baptism. If it is that of simple succession or, really or virtually, of identity, each being a sign and a seal of the same Covenant of Grace on the one hand, and of the same righteousness of faith on the other, as, at one time and with many others, we ourselves undoubtingly held, thus, unless some special distinction can be drawn or discovered, we would continue to hold, as an evidently logical conclusion that, in both cases, the children, as standing in the same relation to their parents, should continue to be recognised as in ancient times. Thus, if circumcision was a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, and if

baptism is also a sign and seal of the same righteousness of faith; and, further, if that righteousness draw along with it the circumcision of the children of Abrahamic parents, we cannot see how the same righteousness should not also draw along with it the baptism of the children of Christian parents. If the premises are admitted, which they are not, we do not see how the conclusion can fairly be withheld. Before making close inquiry as to the real import of the Apostle's words, we may fairly say, on the other side, that, if the interpretation above supposed and the inference above drawn from it were really correct, it would be hardly credible that the inference should not so much as once be confirmed or illustrated by the record of an actual case of infant baptism, either in the New Testament or in any known writing of the earlier Fathers who succeeded the Apostles, and for ages carried down the history of the Christian Church.

2nd. Let us then inquire as to the real meaning of the words of the Apostle. We need not say that here Paul makes a most striking and convincing use of the case of Abraham—the very head of the race, and the real human source or rather medium of all the peculiar privileges in which the Jews gloried, and of whose "glorying" he had already spoken. The blessedness pronounced by David related to all men so forgiven or so justified. This, however, was emphatically that of Abraham, as expressed in the words quoted from Gen. xv. concerning him, "Abraham believed God (in Jehovah), and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." A question follows of greatest force: "Is this blessing (or blessedness) pronounced

upon the circumcision or upon the uncircumcision also?" If on the circumcision or whole body of the circumcised, especially if on them exclusively, there might be room for Jewish triumphing. If not, then the foundation of all their "glorying" must be viewed as overthrown.

The answer is decisive, "For we say, To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness." All was purely personal. "How then was it reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? not in circumcision but in uncircumcision." At the time of this special and Divinely honoured faith, Abraham was as really a Gentile as any one of any of the nations around them, and whom the Jews were wont to despise. With no previous superiority or mark or sign of separation from the rest of mankind, Abraham received a most precious promise from Jehovah, with a simple and sincere faith in Him. That promise, whatever its peculiar form, involved the boundless saving grace of God, and when received would create the very feeling of acceptance to which the Divine words were intended to give rise. Jehovah, in fact, treated this Gentile simply and really as a sinner saved by faith through grace; and resolved to use him, as such, and for the good of mankind, and that to the end of the world, as a type or pattern, a father in point of likeness or resemblance. Accordingly He so set forth Abraham as an example of one forgiven, accepted, justified, accounted righteous, through faith in Himself, that all men might be assured that, if they had like faith in God, He, as "no respecter of persons," would without doubt treat them after the same manner, "reckon their faith for righteousness," or regard them as forgiven,

accepted, justified, righteous in His sight, in a word, as sinners saved by faith and through grace alone.

3rd. It is said of Christ, "Him hath God the Father sealed;" and so set Him forth as the Son of God and the Saviour of men. The sign or signs of His mission formed, and still form, the seal of Himself. So was Abraham sealed, or the righteousness, the acceptance, the justifying character of his faith, sealed by God. He was so treated, that all knew him to be infallibly sealed or declared to be a model sinner saved through faith in God; as we have said, a father by likeness, that all might follow his example in this faith in God, and so enjoy the favour, the acceptance, the salvation of God. That this fatherhood by resemblance is quite simple and Scriptural, we find illustrated in an earlier portion of Genesis, chap. iv. 20, 21, He was the father of such as dwell in tents. . . . He was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." Such was Abraham, "The father of the faithful or of the believing," the father of all who, like him, believe in God, or whose faith is reckoned to them for righteous-The seal here alluded to is the seal of the righteousness of his faith alone, as it was designed to declare him alone to be a model - a father of all believers. As Christ was sealed to be the Saviour in whom all were to believe; so Abraham was sealed to be the example of all who would follow him in the justifying, saving faith which he reposed in God. To infer, then, or to speak of anything whatever as a like seal of any one else, is to set aside the whole nature and end of this one solitary seal, which did and alone could stamp the very image and superscription of the great king on this model man, this one and only father of believers to the end of time.

4th. In what way, then, was Abraham or the righteousness of his faith sealed by God? Simply by such a high, such a visible, such a permanent honour, as could not, or at least need not, fail to show that He would treat all, who believed like Abraham, as He treated Abraham, or as a son of Abraham by likeness, or as in like manner accepted and saved through faith. Whilst this seal, appointed as it was personally to Abraham, infallibly declared the reality or genuineness of Abraham's faith, the mere application of the like sign could not by possibility be a seal or prove to be the like genuineness of the faith of any other man. The sign was a seal to Abraham. The sign was a seal to no other man. What was the sign appointed by God which formed the seal of the righteousness of Abraham's faith, or declared him to be the father of the faithful to all generations—first to the believing within the circle of his own race, and next to the believing throughout the whole Gentile world? Paul tells us. He says, "Abraham received the sign of circumcision." By this was he, or the righteousness of his faith, thus sealed, and sealed for all time. But what did this really mean? Certainly no mere physical or bodily mark. It was something else of which that mark was simply, as Paul says, "The sign." The real seal was the grand Abrahamic covenant, of which circumcision was the sign — a sign which was to continue through all generations a standing signforming the one seal of the one father of the faithful everywhere, and of all time. The Abrahamic family viewed as a covenant people, with an appointed country, with manifold promises and privileges, with a special son, a seed of Abraham, to arise for the world's salvation, and with God Himself to be emphatically, though not unconditionally, their God; and all kept and cared for as indeed, the people of God so long as they continued to act as His people; such was and such continued to be the real seal here spoken of, a seal which remains in the whole history of that Abrahamic family, and, especially now and for many past ages, in the history of Him whose actual coming has brought with it that true light of which the Abrahamic revelations were as no more than the first streak of the morning dawn.

5th. We may here pause to add what we deem the very best Scripture illustration of this important subject. We refer to the case of Phinehas who, "when he executed judgment—the plague was stayed; and that was counted to him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore" (Ps. cvi. 30, 31). Was this righteousness sealed, in some sense, like that of Abraham? It is not verbally said to have been so, but to all intents it actually was so, as we find in Numbers xxv. 10-13, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas . . . hath turned My wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was zealous for My sake among them, that I consumed them not in My jealousy. Wherefore say, Behold I give unto him My covenant of peace; and he shall have it, and his seed after him (even) the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was jealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." Here we have the case of an act, well-pleasing to God, declared by God to have been counted for righteousness, and, we may say, virtually sealed, after a similar manner, by means of a standing honour, by the gift or appointment "of a covenant of peace;" "and it shall be unto him, and to his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood." That covenant or Divine arrangement for a special succession in the priesthood of Phinehas and his sons in their generations, formed the visible and standing sign by which Jehovah was pleased to seal the righteousness of the conduct of Phinehas in upholding the offended majesty and law of the Divine King of Israel. As the priestly succession continued, the seal of the righteousness of Phinehas would be upheld in the midst of the worshipping people. No one would ever think of that succession as also sealing the righteousness of any act or conduct on the part of those who followed their accepted and honoured father in the exercise of the priestly function. And so no one who believed as Abraham believed, and who was saved as Abraham was saved, ought ever to think that his faith, or the righteousness of his faith, was sealed as Abraham's was. To make circumcision, then, the seal of the righteousness of any one but Abraham, is simply to misunderstand or to misrepresent the entire meaning of the Apostle. So, to make baptism not only to follow circumcision as of exactly the same place and purpose, but also as the seal of the righteousness of any believer in Jesus Christ, is as really to misunderstand or to misrepresent the entire nature and design of this Christian rite.

6th. All will appear simpler and clearer as we advance, it may be at the expense of some repetition. "That he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness

might be reckoned to them" also. Let it be again noted, "a father" by likeness or resemblance in point of faith: that is to say, a Gentile, believing like Abraham, became a son of Abraham, in acceptance as well as in faith, without shadow of obligation to practise any like external rite. A whole nation might have arisen, having Abraham's faith, enjoying the same salvation, and required to practise no special rite or ceremony, any more than Melchisedec, or any other of the grey fathers in the faith, from Adam down to Abraham, and as long after as the faith was retained and handed down from generation to generation. Not one of them could have maintained such a connection between parent and child as our Pædobaptist friends have so often and so strongly maintained in the case of Jewish and Christian children. The fact is, that there never was such a connection set forth in either Old or New Testament Scripture, as that contended for by many. This is true both physically and spiritually. Children were circumcised, not because of their connection with their immediate fathers, but because of their connection with their one and only common father Abraham, and not that only, but specially through Isaac and Jacob, and that simply and solely, because it was the race of Abraham which was alone separated from the rest of mankind, and alone required or entitled to bear the sign of the Covenant of the appointed separation. Only in connection with the practical purposes of national or social life, have we any reason to suppose that any Gentile would have been encouraged to fall in with the racial institution, unless, as we may add, for the purpose of the more prominently showing that, as strangers, they laid hold of that Covenant which had been set forth by the token of the rainbow for all men, as truly as that of Abraham for the encouragement of faith and practice like those of that Father of all believers.

7th. "And the father of circumcision to them who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had in uncircumcision." Here, again, Abraham appears as a father in likeness or by resemblance, even to those who were his children or descendants by natural birth. Here, too, we have the only real or spiritual connection with Abraham traced, not to nature, nor to circumcision, but to that alone to which Paul had just traced all connection with him on the part of uncircumcised Gentiles who believed. The circumcised have no real sonship any more than the Gentiles around them, unless, as we are here told, they have the same justifying or saving faith, and prove that they have such by "walking in the steps of the faith which Abraham had before his own circumcision," or whilst he was an uncircumcised Gentile:—the only difference between Jew and Gentile, while in unbelief, being that the former had special advantages because of the fact and the purpose or purposes of their peculiar separation. But, it may be asked, Is not all this contradicted by the words of Peter: "The promise is to you and to your children"? Does this imply no special position or advantage on the side of the circumcision? It certainly does. Let Paul answer: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit (is there) of circumcision? Much, every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the

faith of God without effect?" Thus the highest of all the advantages of the descendants of Abraham were those pertaining to the Scriptures of God, the very advantages which we in this land and others in other lands, enjoy far more richly than they of the circumcision ever enjoyed. The Abrahamic Covenant, then, never did constitute his descendants as such the children of himself viewed as the Father of the Faithful, far less could it constitute all infant descendants. who could by possibility have no faith at all, children by resemblance of him who, father by resemblance alone, was such solely because of the faith in Jehovah which he possessed. How sad, then, the state of such infant children who died in infancy! Certainly not. It was not in Abraham that any or all of these died. And it will not be in any case that in Abraham shall such be made alive. No. Our hope for all such rests on a wider and deeper foundation: "In Adam all die" -we speak here of such infants alone-" and in Christ shall all be made alive." Happily, as to all who die in infancy, and before they can possibly resemble Abraham in faith or any belief in Jesus Christ, only a sadly perverted mind can make the shadow of a difference in point of final destiny between those of circumcised and uncircumcised—of baptised and unbaptised—of even the righteous and the unrighteous, the most exalted Christian and the most depraved heathen.

Dr. Candlish, "Handbook," pages 26, 27:—"Besides the name of signs, that of seals has also been generally given by Christian divines to the Sacraments. The only direct warrant in Scripture for the application of this idea is in Rom. iv. 12, where Paul describes circumcision in the case of Abraham as a sign and a seal of

the righteousness of faith." Here we must beg to say that Dr. Candlish, with many others, has given a totally false quotation from the Apostle Paul, who says, not "a seal of the righteousness of faith," but especially, "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he (Abraham) had while he was in uncircumcision," that is to say that the seal was no mere sign of the Covenant, but expressly a seal of the actual or personal faith of Abraham alone whilst he was yet uncircumcised, and proved every Gentile who had the faith of Abraham, apart from any rite as circumcision, was like Abraham righteous before God, and therefore there might have been millions of Gentiles never circumcised, and yet enjoying all that righteousness which like Abraham entitled them to all the blessings of salvation by grace through faith.

"But," Dr. Candlish goes on, "the extension of this designation to the sacraments of the New Testament is fully warranted by the fact, that we find in each of them that special function that is denoted by the word seal and that a distinct and important part of their use. perceive this we must consider what is the essential idea of a seal as applied to spiritual things."

Here Dr. Candlish again errs as to this passage, entirely forgetting that the Apostle still speaks of the special seal, not of faith in general, but of the one special faith of Abraham, which constituted him alone the Father of the Faithful, or as we have said, the one model saint or believer in God saved through grace by faith. Paul refers simply to, not a seal as to spiritual things in general, but as to the special seal of the actual faith of Abraham, constituting him alone a model saint or Father of the Faithful.

Dr. Candlish still proceeds, page 31, "it is to be

observed that the sacraments are not said to seal those who receive them; and so the phrase sometimes applied to them, 'sealing ordinances,' is not quite correct. They are seals of the righteousness of faith; they seal or confirm to us God's promise, and Christ's love; but there is no warrant in Scripture for saying that they seal us; though the Church of Rome has made it a doctrine that Baptism and Ordination imprint a character or stamp as it were on the soul, which is indelible."

In these words Dr. Candlish wisely and truly withdraws the expression, "sealing ordinances," as being incorrect when the word "seal" is supposed to apply to actual individuals, as is constantly done by Presbyterians of the present day. In order to defend himself, he goes back to the expression, not of "a seal of the righteousness of the actual faith which Abraham possessed before circumcision," and while he became for all peoples and all generations the one and alone Father of the Faithful, but of "a seal of the righteousness of faith" which we maintain is a mutilated and defective statement of the Apostle's words, setting aside everything personal in the faith of Abraham, and actually making the words apply to Christian faith in general, and thus depriving them of all special relation to Christian baptism.

Page 67. Dr. Candlish further treats of the question of regeneration itself. He strangely says:—"Again, this practice if it means anything, teaches that there can be no regeneration where there is no conscious or intelligent faith" [i.e., according to the Baptists]. "But as Scripture plainly teaches that without regeneration there can be no salvation, the practice of baptising the children of Christian parents only when they can profess their faith implies that infants cannot be saved."

Wonderful inference! Dr. Candlish here clearly proves that unbaptised dying infants cannot be possibly regenerated and saved by the power of the Holy Spirit, as all enlightened Pædobaptists (Dr. Wardlaw and others) believe, and as would otherwise imply that not only the infant children of infant-baptists must all perish or could not possibly be saved—a monstrous doctrine! which we could hardly suppose it possible for Dr. Candlish or any intelligent divine to have ever expressed in any intelligible language.

Pages 72, 73. "In the case of infants," the Dr. still

Pages 72, 73. "In the case of infants," the Dr. still further adds, "there is a peculiar difficulty in explaining the efficacy of baptism; and the Scriptural requirement of faith for the right and profitable reception of the sacrament is the strongest objection against the practice

of infant baptism."

We would fully agree with the excellent Dr. if he had just said that that requirement is perfectly sufficient to abolish all infant baptism or the baptism of all absolutely incapable of Christian faith, or Christian knowledge of any kind.

Only one remark more by Dr. Candlish—"The Protestant doctrine of the efficacy of baptism, as held by the Westminster Divines does not imply that its

efficacy must take place at once."

This means that the Westminster Divines, and with them apparently Dr. Candlish and other Presbyterians, agree in holding that they can never know whether any child can be said to be at any one time actually or effectually baptised at all; thus falling in with many clergymen of the Church of England, and to all purposes lending some aid to Baptismal Regeneration.

II. Rom. vi. 1-7.—" What shall we say then? Shall

we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also (in the likeness) of (His) resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with (Him), that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed (justified) from sin." We cannot well exaggerate the importance of the right interpretation of these words of Paul. In them we find a striking transition from the treatment of the doctrine of justification to that of the doctrine of sanctification. He starts the objection, which might appear sufficient to overthrow the whole of the foregoing reasoning, and which has been often since raised to the grand central doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, without works of law. An inference is supposed to be drawn, that if where sin abounded grace did more abound, one would be encouraged, not to deny himself and serve God the more gratefully and faithfully, but to persist in sinning more and more that the superabounding grace might still more abound. He meets the objection with what he deems an unanswerable question, "How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

This question has very often been misunderstood, and that by some of our foremost interpreters, as if it related to mental or spiritual deadness or insensibility

to sin and to the manifold inducements to sin. However, Paul has not yet spoken of any such deadness or insensibility, partaking as it does of the nature of sanctification. He had, however, treated of sin as reigning unto death; so that all who believed in Jesus as being, in their stead or in their behalf, obedient unto death, must regard themselves as having so died in Him to sin, as to be freed through Him from all personal condemnation. The mere expression, "dead to sin," might be fitly used to signify that total insensibility to sin, which perfected holiness or sinless perfection may imply, but which, whatever some may profess to have reached, certainly cannot be predicated, as here, of all believers. This, then, could not possibly be meant. For, if those intended were in such a sense dead to sin, it would imply a palpable impossibility, a contradiction in terms, for them to be at the same time alive to it, or to be really capable of committing it. Paul, accordingly, must speak of being "dead to sin" in one sense, and of "living in it" in another; and then his words will be consistent and have force and point.

That he does so, we may perhaps more clearly see by carefully considering the context, as, for example, in the 7th verse, "He that is dead is freed from sin," or, rather, "is justified from sin." By this Paul evidently means, not that the man who has become dead to further sin, or temptation to sin, is justified from all past transgression, but that the man who has died, as suffering the penalty due to his sin or sins, is no longer exposed to condemnation, but is justified, in the eye of law, with respect to what he has done amiss. This is assuredly the sense of the words as they occur in the Apostle's question. In proof, we have just to

consider the same words as they are almost immediately afterwards applied to Christ Himself. He, too, is said to have "died to sin once." Now this cannot refer to any moral or spiritual death, any moral or spiritual insensibility to sin. Jesus had never been thus morally or spiritually alive to it. He had died, however, on the Cross on account of it—in this sense most truly had "died to sin once." In a like sense, all who become one with Him by faith are to be regarded, and are taught to regard themselves, as having in Him also died to sin. Hence the words which follow: "Likewise, reckon ve also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," How grand these words, "For in that He died, He died unto sin once." He was not His own whilst He lived; He was, for the sin of the world, from first to last under a law of sin and death. He belonged not to Himself. By His own voluntary act, and in the room of a guilty world, He had come under sin, which ever reigns unto death. He then belonged not even to God. Only by death could He rise above death and become the rightful possessor of life-life eternal-and really belong to God, and so for ever live to God. Those for whom He died had forfeited life through and so to sin, had ceased to be their own; like sons condemned to die had ceased to belong to their own fathers, had ceased to belong to their Divine Father. United to Christ by faith, and so dying in Him, they are justified, and in this sense freed from sin, are restored to their God and Father, and their God and Father is restored to them. In the words to which we refer they are not only permitted, but even required or commanded, to do what they ought above all things to rejoice in doing—"Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin," and so emancipated from its rightful deadly power, "but alive unto God," and so restored to His fatherly heart and home, and all the services and privileges of His family. Such is the meaning of the words, "dead unto sin," and "alive unto God." Paul could not mean that they were to reckon themselves what they certainly were not, absolutely insensible to sin and perfectly alive to God. He could only mean that their death for sin was abolished, or that they had died in the death of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle's question will thus become, If through the death of Christ we have escaped the death due to our own sin, and if we are thus indebted to Him for so vast a deliverance from so terrible a foe as sin, how should we again treat it as a friend, and so give ourselves up to its deadly influence? Should not, henceforth, love to self as well as love to Christ, constrain us to live to Christ, to holiness, and to God? The false inference or groundless objection to the doctrine of justification or of salvation, by the boundless grace of God through Jesus Christ, could not be more satisfactorily met and overthrown. What follows, we are to view in the light of simple and clear illustration. Another question is added: "Know ye not," or "Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death?" At present we shall say no more as to this baptism than that it implies oneness with Christ by Faith, oneness with Himself in His life, in His death, in His burial, and in His resurrection, with that glorious life which follows and which shall be everlasting. Paul thus clearly sets forth the death of every believer in the death of Christ.

This, he declares, implies the burial of the believer in the burial of Christ; and that as implying still further a future resurrection through the resurrection of Christ, and, in the meantime, "that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also," one with Him by faith, "might walk in newness of life;" that death for sin being thus past, a new life of loving obedience to God might begin.

In further illustration, the Apostle goes on to add, "For if we have become closely united with Him in His death, so shall we be also in His resurrection," clearly showing that the full meaning of the baptism spoken of cannot be realised till the believer has been as truly and finally raised from physical death, or from the tomb, as has been the blessed Saviour Himself. Hence it is added, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be destroyed (or disabled or done away), that so we should no longer serve (or be in bondage to) sin." The two expressions here used would seem of like meaning; but appear best explained, the former of men viewed in their natural state of sin, and the latter of the seat or sum of the corrupt or sinful nature of men. Thus Paul speaks of having himself been crucified with Christ on the one hand, and yet as so under 'the law of sin, which is in his members,' as to lead him to cry, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And in keeping with the words here used, we find him tracing deliverance to the same source, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," in fact, by the Holy Spirit promised to all who believe. Hence he adds, "If ve live after the flesh" (the corrupt nature), "ve must die; but if by the Spirit ye mortify" (put to death) "the deeds of the body, ye shall live," and eventually rise above all sin.

Here we see the real and close connection between the enjoyment of the free gift of justification and the beginning of the new life of love to God, and of holiness or sanctification. The believer is justified freely by the precious blood of Jesus, that he may be inspired with love to Jesus and to God, and that He may receive the promised Spirit, "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," whose part it is to "make free from the law of sin and death."

How grand the words which follow: "But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." Then comes the key to the true meaning of the whole passage, as well as to the spiritual life and power of the believer, "Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus;" and therefore go on through the Spirit with the work of progressive sanctification, and never more "let sin reign in your mortal body," your body whilst it retains the remnants of its old and sinful nature, "that ye should obey the lusts thereof."

Let us now consider the bearing of this passage on the question of baptism. We need not say that it has given rise to very marked difference of view, and also to much, and sometimes the keenest, controversy. In fact, the first point has been, To what baptism does the Apostle allude? It would seem that only one could possibly be intended, that of the great commission with which all Christians were supposed to be familiar. All are addressed as thus acquainted with the design or meaning of it. Nay, the "or" here introduced seems to imply that, if they failed to see the force of the words just used as to having "died to sin," their familiarity with this baptism could admit of no failure as to their seeing the nature and feeling the force of the illustration so vividly added, "Know ye not," or "are ye ignorant that so many of us as were baptised," or rather, as the words should have been rendered, "that all we who were baptised," or still more exactly, "that we, as many as were baptised into, or unto, Christ Jesus" — implying that all addressed had been so baptised—"were baptised into or unto His death?" He assumed that they all knew that their baptism implied a oneness with Christ Himself, and, by consequence, with Him in "His death." This supposed universal knowledge would seem to refer to that baptism which, especially as a visible, most striking, and universal act, would most naturally occur to all. Our old translation has indeed led to the idea that only a certain number of them were thus baptised. Alford has well said, "Not as E.V., again most unfortunately, 'so many of us as were;' giving it to be understood that some of them had not been thus baptised." The meaning of this clause evidently is, that in being baptised into or unto Christ, the baptised is supposed to be already one by faith with Christ in His death as well as His life—in fact, one with Him in every respect in which He may be regarded as standing in a saving and substitutional relation to the believer, and so, as we

shall find, in His life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, glorification, eternal life.

Hence it is added: "We were then buried with Him by, or by means of, the baptism into or unto the death," that is, "by or by means of one baptism into or unto His death." We take this to mean that if we were one with Him in His death we are to be regarded as one with Him in that which necessarily followed. and which naturally declared the reality of His death. It is here that the idea of a likeness of the symbol of baptism to the reality of the symbolised death and burial, as also resurrection of Christ and His professing people, has laid hold of countless minds, amongst whom are to be ranked many of the most able and learned of our commentators, ancient and modern, English and European, whether Baptist or Pædobaptist, whether upholding the practice of infant affusion or adult immersion, whether accounting it obligatory to adhere to what they deem Scriptural, or considering it a matter of freedom to adopt whatever mode of baptism they may deem most suitable to their ideas of this initiatory rite.

Some again maintain that this passage really proves nothing as to the nature of the Divinely appointed ordinance of baptism, that nothing more is intended than that oneness with Christ is alone expressed, and that the words of the Apostle might have been used by him, whatever the mode of baptism, or even though it had been expressly declared to be sprinkling or any modified form which may have been actually adopted.

We simply reply that we can only act on the principle that it is ever safest and best to follow just as Scripture is found, or is believed, to lead. Some would

more positively maintain that the logic of the Apostle's argument does not imply any certain allusion to immersion, as here the apostolic mode of baptism. We shall not argue this point. Only we may note one or two things which appear to amount to sufficient proof:—

- (1.) Holding, as we do, that the Lord's Supper is most fitly representative of the broken Body and shed Blood of the blessed Redeemer, we deem it most consistent to regard the initiatory rite of baptism as, in like manner, symbolic of the union of the believer with Him in His life, death, burial, and resurrection, as here seen to be most wonderfully exact, whether designed or not. Certainly early Christians, all familiar with the ordinance, did not doubt the intended figurative resemblance.
- (2.) Many whose prepossessions would naturally lead them to think otherwise, have gone so far as to treat this passage as of itself demonstrative of immersion as the mode of primitive baptism.
- (3.) We find the Apostle making at least a like, if not an identical, allusion, not only in Col. ii. 12, but also 1 Cor. x. 1-4.
- (4.) We seem justified in regarding Jesus as making a figurative use of the baptismal form: "I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke xii. 50), alluding to His terrible and expected sufferings, to which He could not more fitly refer than as that of being immersed in woe, sunk in sorrow, plunged in affliction.

We shall now consider one or two other exegetical views of this passage.

We may begin with that of the late able and excel-

lent Dr. Morison, in his enlightened and instructive exposition of Romans vi., in which he treats, with great power and insight, of the doctrine of sanctification in its relation to that of justification.

He says, p. 6: "'Know ye not'-surely it is the case that ye know—the Apostle is about to make a statement which he expected to be instantly endorsed by his Roman brethren—'that all we who were baptised into Christ Jesus'-i.e., who were united to Christ Jesus by baptism. The expression, είς Χριστον, is not to be rendered (in various ways given, but) correctly into Christ. The phrase is a Pauline idiom, but it simply denotes inward union with Christ effected by inward baptism. That is the Apostle's idea. He is thinking of such union as qualifies believers of the Gospel for affirming we died to sin; we died, namely, in Christ. . . . How should such a vital union be effected through baptism? Never through the baptism of water. It is a spiritual union. It is a union that is realisable and realised in, for example, holy and consistent members of the Society of Friends. . . . It has been realised by the holy in all ages, &c. . . . When, then, the Apostle says, 'We were baptised into Christ Jesus,' he refers exclusively to that spiritual or mystic baptism which has been common to all ages and dispensations, and which is expressly spoken of in Matt. iii. 11, 'I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire.' . . . We read again in the Acts of the Apostles i. 4, 5, 'that Jesus charged His disciples to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, ve heard from Me, for John indeed baptised with water;

but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many

days hence."

To this baptism, the Doctor ascribes the grand superhuman work of union with Christ. In reply to this long quotation, we may begin with this affirmation, namely, that Paul, in this passage, is to be regarded as distinctly tracing the union implied to the promised baptism of the Holy Spirit. What are we then to infer? Assuredly that those so promised, even those disciples whom Jesus charged to wait, were not yet converted or vitally united to Christ Jesus. When John humbly contrasted his water baptism with the promised baptism, he implicitly declared that neither his baptism, nor that of Christ Himself before His resurrection, was the baptism of truly spiritual men, or, in the latter case, of true disciples of Jesus Christ, of men vitally or inwardly united to Him-all had yet to remain for the promised future work of the Holy Spirit. Here we cannot but remark a very certain mistake. We agree most fully with Dr. Morison in holding that "no man can be united to Jesus, or call Him Lord, but by the Holy Spirit." But we distinguish most clearly between the vast and universal work of the Spirit in its relation to the unconverted and unrenewed world of mankind, and the more limited and special operations of His grace in order to the perfection of the converted, and thus for the renewed children of God, or, as in the case of Pentecost, to prepare, as already vitally, or spiritually, or inwardly united, and that by faith and through the Holy Spirit, and baptised in water by the authority of Jesus, or by the hands of His disciples accordingly. Though here overlooking this broad and grand distinction, no contemporary divine was more enlightened as

to its nature, or more alive to its importance, than our learned commentator himself. Of course, water baptism never did, or could, inwardly unite to Christ, unless in so far as the continued exercise of the faith which had already so united to Him, added to the depth and strength of that union so symbolised and so professed. We need not say of all sections of the Christian Church, none have been at least professedly more opposed to the idea of water baptism being the direct initial means or medium of salvation, regeneration, or inward union with Jesus Christ. Such baptism they hold to be wholly figurative. The baptism of the Spirit Pentecostal, or in any way or sense promised to believers, as, for instance, a seal of their faith, they magnify as most real, precious, and everlasting.

Our author greatly errs when he maintains that the expression, "into Christ," here means "united by baptism." We hold by the important, and, we might say, by the infallible principle, that in all cases of water baptism the proper subject of it is supposed not to need that into which he is about to be baptised, but, in order to be a legitimate subject of it, to have, nay, to have inwardly, that of which he is about to make an open or outward profession. Just let faith, repentance, regeneration, or any work of the Holy Spirit, go before water baptism, and then all will be clear, and what is called the baptism of the Spirit will be seen rightly and Scripturally to follow, as a great reality and a rich promise, not to convert, or spiritually to unite, to Christ, but in order to the advancing of the holiness of believers and their higher fitness for the conversion of others, or their union with Christ, and the commanded profession of outward or water baptism.

In fact, few amongst infant baptists could be found to doubt the power of a sincere faith savingly to unite to Jesus, or to require for its origin, as here maintained,

"the promised baptism of the Holy Spirit."

"Still, we may allude to the illustration from 1 Cor. xii. 13: 'For the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; So also is Christ (viz., in His mystic or ideal personality). For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.' Ver. 27, 'Now we are the body of Christ, and severally members

thereof.'

"To be baptised into Christ, then, is to be united to Him spiritually and vitally by that spiritual influence that baptises souls." This looks to the point. And yet it is very far from being so. Here, indeed, we find no symbolic, no mere water baptism, but that of the grandest and most precious gift of Christ and promise of God, not to the unbelieving, but to those in this very passage itself, expressly described as the body of Christ, and members of that body of which Christ is the glorious Head, nay, of which, as of the very stem, Christ receives the very name. Let any one read the preceding verses, and we may safely say that he will not fail to see that Paul is speaking simply and solely, not of those who have yet to be united by faith to Jesus Christ, but of those who have already been so united to Him and by that very Spirit, and who, accordingly, are called the body of Christ, into which all have been baptised by one Spirit. It is one thing for men to be united individually or severally to

Christ and another for all so united to be still further united collectively as one glorious, harmonious, and all-animated body, with countless members, all doing their peculiar parts in the economy of the mystic body of which Christ is the Mystic Head. We repeat, the first or personal work of the Spirit, however real, is never called a baptism; whilst the second or collective work is called by that name, and is ever promised and imparted to such only as have been the subjects of the first, and are as Christ's body to be henceforth and for ever immersed in, and animated by, and endowed with the infinitely diversified and most needful and useful gifts of the Holy Spirit. When we mark the words of Peter on the very day on which the promised baptism was granted, we find this very distinction truly and clearly expressed. "Then Peter said unto them. Repent, and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins," that is, yield to the Spirit in thus seeking to unite you to Jesus and be baptised in His name, assuredly, by the baptism of water, and in confession of your faith in Him, your Messiah; and what next and only next?-"and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This gift, this promise of the Father, here just announced by the Apostle, seems to be set forth in various forms in Scripture, as by the prophet Joel, by John the Baptist, and Christ Himself as a baptism, and so also by Peter in the words just quoted; and by Paul as a baptism, but not as an exceptional or peculiar blessing, rather as a universal gift in keeping with the words of Peter, just referring to all penitent and sincerely professing followers of the great and glorified Messiah

To the same gift, under another figure, Paul seems most beautifully to refer, and that in perfect keeping with all this, in Eph. i. 12-14 (R.V.), "to the end that we should be unto the praise of His glory, we who had before hoped in Christ: in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the Gospel of your salvation,—in whom, having also believed, ve were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of (God's) own possession, unto the praise of His glory." Here we have the one and the same promised Spirit, and bestowed to those who had before believed the Gospel of their salvation and were so united to Christ. We might just allude to Gal. iii., where the great promise is referred to as very ancient, even as given to Abraham, v. 14, "that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith;" ver. 29, "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise." We may just make one other reference, and that to the great Teacher Himself-"If ye love Me, keep My commandments (or, R.V., ye will keep My commandments). And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever, (even) the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth (R.V., beholdeth) Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with (R.V., abideth with) you, and shall be in you" (John xiv. 15-17)—fully implying that the baptism of the Spirit, the unceasing gift of the Spirit, the perpetual, in-dwelling, enlightening, comforting, and finally glorifying presence of the Spirit of Promise cannot so much as be

possible in the case of any save those who are vitally or inwardly united to Jesus Christ.

In this way we may see that, in the sixth chapter of Romans, we have no real reason for departing from the almost universal view, that the reference is to the water baptism of the apostolic commission, and by no possible means to the Pentecostal or promised Baptism of the Spirit. Those holding by this usual reference may indeed go far astray as to the force of the passage, and even add very sadly to the true meaning of it, and so commit a far greater mistake than that with which we have been dealing.

Before passing on to one or other of these, we may shortly refer to the work of Mr. Guthrie, the able and excellent professorial colleague of Dr. Morison; we mean his "Pædobaptist Guide," in which he takes, as to this passage, nearly the same view as that of which we have just been treating. He gives, p. 198, Section II., "A Special Exposition of Rom. vi. 3, 4," wonderfully agreeing, as we have said, with that of Dr. Morison. We might allude to this at some length, but would rather simply deal with what the author deems a great error common to Baptist writers, that of carrying to excess the symbolism of the rite in question, p. 216, "along with this vicious interpretation, all the vicious symbolism reared upon it, making baptism a type of Christ's death and resurrection, and almost every redemptive truth of course falls to the ground; and the rite emerges . . . to its proper simplicity and symmetry by the side of the sister rite of the Lord's Supper—that rite symbolising the atoning work of God the Son, while baptism symbolises the purifying work of God the Spirit." We have dealt

pretty fully with the question involved in these already. They contain a very great mistake with respect to the very nature and important relation of the two grand ordinances of the Christian Church, which are closely connected as one wonderful whole, at once complete, harmonious, precious, sublime, impressive and expressive of the truth of Redemption, in fact, a standing monument and infallible proof of the truth or truths, so perfectly symbolised, as to show the hand of no human, but certainly of a Divine and creative mind.

Many seem to err just as Mr. Guthrie here, in supposing that the one sets forth the work of the Son, and the other that of the Spirit, and especially in regarding them as symbolical of virtually two distinct portions of Divine and saving truth. Whilst so holding, we need not wonder at the exclusive view of an entirely spiritual baptism taken by Dr. Morison and Mr. Guthrie of Rom. vi. It is completely forgotten that the baptism of Christ and the apostolic commission is a baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and, therefore, into the whole truth of salvation. Especially is it forgotten that this baptism is a baptism on the profession of faith in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and, therefore, as just said, into the sum of all the grand truth of redemption-in a word, a baptism of at once professing and expressing discipleship. It should, therefore, if symbolical at all, symbolise all the central essential truth of the Christian system, and consequently the special work of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Taking the Lord's Supper as certainly representative of the death of Jesus, or rather of Jesus

after death, it sets Him forth as the very life and health of His people, and it does so by a most expressive pictorial representation of His Body as broken, and of His Blood as shed. Baptism, accordingly, should set forth assuredly the work of the Spirit, as regenerating and sanctifying, but as we have said, not His work alone, but also the work of Jesus; for, in the work of regeneration, we ought to be very careful lest we fail to combine in that work the power of the truth as it is in Jesus, viewed as the instrument, with the operation of the Spirit as the agent in it. The baptism which we hold to be alone Scriptural, combines in its representation the work of the Spirit in leading to faith and union with Christ, and in thus leading at the same time to the new birth—a real symbol of the new birth must be in some way of both that of the Son of God, and that of the Holy Spirit, a baptism representing the Spirit alone, and apart from Christ would fail entirely to symbolise the full work of regeneration; and would only suggest what too many seem to suppose, even an inspiration of the spiritual life, apart from a contemporaneous faith in Jesus Christ. Nothing could more simply represent a new birth than a simple immersion and emersion of one duly baptised; whilst the element, water, in which the baptism takes place, is all the while most simply fitted to represent all the grand work of sanctification from first to last, and that of the Holy Spirit. By keeping all this in view, we the more clearly see the connection of the two ordinances in so far as they point to the whole Christian life, that of the new or second birth, and, therefore, only once observed, and that of the other, or of continued feeding on Jesus as the true and only Bread of Life, and, therefore, observed frequently throughout the whole of the Christian's career.

Here we might introduce a few notes from our critical commentators, but will quote only the following from Prof. Godet's excellent work on Romans. In p. 410, we have, "Infant baptism does not seem to me to be either assumed or excluded by this passage. The baptism assumed here is certainly that of adults, and adults only. The act of baptism is put between faith (with death to sin through faith) on the one hand, and renewing of the Holy Spirit on the other." (This we dispute, as faith inspired by the Spirit implies that renewal before baptism.) "Baptism thus understood, therefore involves the actual fact of faith and of death to sin, as much as burial implies the death of the buried. But at the same time, it is clear that Paul adduces the rite of baptism such as it exists at the time of his writing. The baptism of adults was that which, from the nature of things, suited the first generation of believers, as the parents required to belong to the church before there could be any question of introducing their children into it. The Apostle does not therefore think of excluding a form which may arise when, circumstances having changed, family life shall have become an integral element in that of the Church. The only question is, whether this modification is in keeping with the spirit of the gospel. And this is a question which it seems to me impossible to examine here without breaking the plan of our exegesis."

Dr. Godet thus regards water baptism as meant by the Apostle in Rom. vi. 1-6; and also fully admits that adult baptism could be alone intended. He also, but strangely, speaks of infant baptism as introduced after

the times of the Apostles, when the Church really took upon herself, not to regard the New Testament as her sole authority, but her own ideas of what may be consistent with the spirit of the Gospel; thus we think opening the door for the introduction of many of those errors which have been to her great injury and corruption. Strange it does appear that any such writer as Dr. Godet should declare that the Church should during the early ages have been made up of so few families, or so incapable of giving or receiving Christian instruction as to prevent the appointment of what is deemed so important as well as suitable, even the practice of infant baptism, and that so soon and ever after, and as the poor, illiterate fathers and mothers of the apostolic Churches grew to be so great in multitude and capacity, as render the only apostolically practised or adult baptism a rare institution within the Church.

We shall now make a comparatively few observations with regard to the views of The Society of Friends, or Quaker views of baptism.

The rise of this excellent community of Christians of humble origin, but noble spirit and remarkable usefulness, has been in many respects, a wonder to all other Christians, as it has proved a rich blessing to the world.

George Fox, the humble, yet illustrious founder, seemed raised up specially to behold as in a vision the great kingdom which the blessed God had promised for ages, and for which he had been preparing in manifold ways from the beginning, especially in its twofold aspects of spirituality and universality.

The Christian, or last and loftiest dispensation, was

clearly seen and profoundly felt to be distinguishable from the Mosaic, the preceding and preparatory; the latter having greatly to do with a single race, an appointed country, laws, rulers, and worship; the former more directly, if not exclusively, with God, the Messiah, the Divine Spirit, the souls of men. One grand point of difference, or even of contrast, was held to have been expressly indicated by the remarkable words of John the Baptist: "I indeed baptise you with (or in) water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and (with) fire." The times of types and shadows and ceremonies were held to be ended; the times of truth, substance, reality, to have followed. The spiritual, and the spiritual alone, remains; and is heavenly and eternal. Such is in some measure the view of Christian or New Testament Truth held by the Friends, of course, to the consistent exclusion of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

As we go on, we may freely make use of Barclay's celebrated "Apology," which certainly says much for the excellent author and for the deservedly esteemed people, whose faith and practice it has so long and so powerfully upheld. We shall humbly subjoin the following:—

1. So far the Baptist belief is maintained: p. 192, PROPOSITION XII. "As there is one Lord, and one faith, so there is one baptism; which is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience before God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And this baptism is a pure and spiritual thing, to wit, the baptism of the Spirit and fire, by which we are

buried with Him, that being washed and purged from our sins, we may walk in newness of life: of which the baptism of John was a figure, which was commanded for a time, and not to continue for ever. As to the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition, for which neither precept nor practice is to be found in all the scripture."

Such is a clear and condensed statement of the Friends concerning Baptism, from which it will be seen that, if we look at general and earliest practices, that of the Baptists is alone recognised. Paul, indeed, is held to have baptised with water on only a few occasions. Still, for a time at least, water baptism continued to be generally, if not universally, practised by Apostles and others. During this time infant baptism was never sanctioned or practised; only believers, therefore, were baptised with water. Still more is indicated. The reference to Rom, vi. 4, shows that immersion was regarded as the mode practised during that supposed passing period. Apart, then, from that previously said of the one baptism, the writer shows that the community which he represents testifies to the original practice of immersion of believers in Jesus Christ. Baptists and Friends really differ, or originally differed, on only one point, namely, as to whether the early practice of believers' immersion was really commanded by Christ as a permanent institution of the New Covenant, or whether, at least being permitted for a season, it was not intended or commanded by Him to continue longer than the time practically needed for a transition from the old to the new covenant modes of thought and life, till, in fact, the supposed true and spiritual baptism of Christ—the one real baptism—had taken its intended and alone recognised place in the Church of God.

2. Referring to the words of John afterwards, as regarded by Friends as indicating that water baptism was simply a type or symbol of the true or only real baptism of the Spirit, we may go on to deal with what we deem the strongest and most striking argument of the "Apology," and, as such, may well be put in the

front against the perpetuity of water baptism.

"As there is one Lord, and one Faith, so there is one Baptism; so that if water baptism remains along with Christ's baptism of the Spirit, we have one Lord, one Faith, and two baptisms, which no one can admit . . . (while) the Apostle positively and plainly affirms that, as there is but one body, one Spirit, one faith, one God, &c., so there is but one baptism," . . . not "two faiths, nor two Gods, nor two Spirits, nor two bodies, whereof the one is outward and elementary, and the other spiritual and pure, to the making up the one faith, the one God, the one body, and the one Spirit: so neither ought there to go two baptisms to make up the one baptism."

This is at once most ingenious and forcible, and, we would say, irresistible, provided these nominally two baptisms are to be, as by Mr. Barclay, and by almost all others, viewed as properly and literally so-called. So, now to return, without further delay, to the words of John the Baptist, and of Christ Himself, as He says, "But wait for the promise of the Father, which (saith He), ye have heard of Mc. For John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence" (Acts i. 4, 5). Now, we repeat, if baptise was here used in the same literal sense, or if the water baptism were to be regarded as a type or

symbol of the promised and coming baptism of the Spirit, two distinct baptisms, quite inadmissible as permanent, would certainly be implied, as our author and the Friends have every right to maintain. Nor do we at all wonder at their rejection of water baptism as permitted only for a time, unless they came to see that they were mistaken in this supposed nature and relationship of the two. However, we are led to see that they are by no means to be viewed as shadow and substance, as form and power, as so much as expressive of the same truth, the one a pictorial representation of one and the grand, and spiritual, and permanent reality. Perhaps Friends, as well as many Baptists, and still more Pædobaptists will be surprised if it be maintained that water baptism is no type of the baptism of the Spirit at all, that they were appointed and promised for two entirely different ends, that the one could be effected by means of water alone, whilst the other could be accomplished through the Divine and glorious power of the Holy Spirit alone; nay, that, in fact, however inferior the baptism of John to the baptism of the Spirit, was and is the one and only true, literal, actual baptism of the Gospel; whilst the baptism of the Spirit, of promise, of Pentecost, of the Prophet Joel, of the inheritance of every true son of Abraham, especially of the great words of Paul, "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the Promise," a universal and everlasting gift and possession to all without exception, who, as Paul says, "In whom ye also (trusted), after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the

redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise

of His glory" (Eph. i. 13, 14).

Those who hold the rite of baptism to be simply an emblem of the work of the Spirit, and that of the Lord's Supper an emblem of the work of the Son, will find it hard to set aside the argument of the "Apology," that, when the substance is come, the shadow must pass away. Only when the literal baptism with water, or, still more literal, baptismal immersion, is understood to mean a complex symbolic representation of the work of Son as well as Spirit, of oneness with Christ as well as new life, and full and final purification through the agency of the Holy Spirit, can the almost total difference between it and the really figurative and not literal baptism of the Spirit be clearly seen and undoubtedly appreciated, as certainly no real immersion or sprinkling and form of any kind whatever. Assuredly it is infinitely more precious in itself than water baptism in itself; but the one as appointed by Christ, which no one should despise or neglect, is just as suitable for its purpose as the other as granted by Christ, and which all should most highly prize and most devoutly seek, is needed and intended for its purpose. This will appear to many extravagant and erroneous; but, whilst we must not for one moment be supposed to imply that water baptism is needed for salvation, nay, whilst we hold that salvation ought to be possessed before that baptism is, according to Christ's appointment, to be justly sought or legitimately enjoyed, we hold also that water baptism is of Divine appointment, a sign of the new covenant, an important and a permanent ordinance of the Christian Church. Instead of this being erroneous or extravagant, we have a clear and parallel

illustration in the case of the sign of the Abrahamic covenant, ordained for the many ages of the Israelitish race. Thus circumcision, whatever its typical import, was at least of actual and literal sense or meaning, entirely made by hands. But what do we read? "And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and He will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live" (Deut. xxx. 5, 6). Here we find two circumcisions, the one literal and the other spiritual; we might say, as correctly as here said of baptism, the former simply human and of legal continuance, the other solely Divine, and not invariable or constant; and yet the Divine and spiritual not affecting, far less taking the place of, the literal and permanent. So again, "And ye are complete in Him. . . . In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ" (Col. ii. 10-12), virtually the same as the baptism of the Spirit—there being no two circumcisions any more than two baptisms; but simply one real circumcision, and another simply nominally so, but actually no circumcision at all. So we have no two baptisms, but simply one real, literal, and by hands, and another "pure and spiritual," and without hands, or by God alone. Instead, therefore, of the spiritual becoming all in all and exclusive, we find Peter on the very day of Pentecost, when the one supposed type or shadow was, according to the "Apology," to take the place of the type, and so abolish it, requiring not only faith but also promise of the water baptism as a condition of the reception of the promised baptism

of the Holy Spirit.

3. We shall now refer to only one other argument pressed by the acute and excellent author of the "Apology." In doing so we may quote the following:-"We find that where the matter of ordinances is the same, and the end the same, they are never accounted more or less spiritual, because of their different times." He goes on to say, p. 200: "Was not the end of them [the purifications and baptisms under the law to signify an inward purifying by an outward washing? And is not that alleged to be the end still?" It may be so in the view of many; and in their case we fully admit the force of the reasoning, and have done so already. Really to the point he adds, "let our adversaries show us, if they can, without begging the question, and building on some one or other of their own principles denied by us, where Christ ever appointed or ordained any institution or observation under the new covenant, as belonging to the nature of it, or such a necessary part of its worship, as is perpetually to continue. . . . And if they cannot do this, then if water baptism was once a carnal ordinance, as the Apostle affirms it to have been, it remains a carnal ordinance still; and if a carnal ordinance, then no necessary part of the Gospel, or new covenant dispensation." We by no means admit that baptism is any such carnal ordinance as here maintained, and affirm that it has all the support of Christ as a new-covenant, and therefore permanent, ordinance, of the last, the Gospel, or newcovenant dispensation.

The proof which Mr. Barclay demands we deem

clear and infallible, namely, "any institution or observation under the New Covenant." Now, as any institution is sufficient for the purpose, we shall begin with the kindred one of the Lord's Supper, to whose

perpetuity our author as strongly objects as to that of baptism. We repeat, he says, "Any Institution;" and we begin with the express words of Jesus, and that with a direct and verbal allusion to the Supper. We, in passing, cannot help adding, that we feel greatly surprised to find a writer of such acuteness and conscientiousness overlooking the one and only instance of what we find to be a direct and verbal reference to the New Covenant as thus set forth by an external and perpetual ordinance, the very thing which is admitted to settle the controversy. He says, "We find this ceremony" (of what he calls, "The Body and Blood of Christ" "only mentioned in Scripture, in four places, to wit, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and by Paul in the Corinthians." It was a pity that he did not carefully and fully quote them, as they distinctly and even verbally demonstrate the case which he so wonderfully overlooks. What do we find? Let all be simply examined. Let us take the first, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat: this is My Body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is My Blood of the New Testament or New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom" (Matt. xxvi. 26-29). So Mark and Luke, as also 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. Only, we may remark, T.

that, in the R.V. the word new is omitted in the text, but put in the margin as in some MSS.; while in the A.V. it fully appears in all the four cases. But, even if it had been omitted in all, the mere use of the word Testament or Covenant would in no degree affect the sense, as no Testament or Covenant could have been possibly meant but the New, and therefore Everlasting.

We may here add that, instead of being a carnal ordinance, as above declared, both this and baptism are to be viewed as pictorial exhibitions or proclamations, through the whole Church, of the glorious Gospel of Jesus, or an appointed declaration to the world of the new and everlasting covenant of the Church of Christ, we may say, as is expressly said in 1 Cor. xi. 26: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew (or, R.V., proclaim) the Lord's death till He come," and, therefore, to be of perpetual and most sacred as well as valuable observance.

As to baptism, the demonstrated perpetuity of the Supper implies for certainty the like perpetuity of it. Jesus used the words just quoted as He was about to close His living ministry and with all the solemnity of His approaching death; and we may say He used the like words as to baptism when He was about to close His entire ministry in company with His disciples, and when He issued that great commission through which He virtually set forth the Divine constitution of the Christian Church, the Church of the new and everlasting covenant:—"The disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. . . . And Jesus came to them, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth, go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising

them into (or unto) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 16–26), clearly implying that Christ would be with them alway to protect and to bless, whilst they continued alway, even to the end of the world, to carry out the work thus commanded, that, therefore, of baptising as well as of making disciples and teaching them faithfully to keep or obey His commandments.

The only other view of this most important passage is that which not only regards baptism with water as meant, but also regards that baptism as also a baptism of the Spirit, or which regards this baptism as in nothing short of baptismal regeneration. We think, in treating of this view, we cannot do better than quote the following from Dr. Pusey's work on baptism, which at first appeared among the "Tracts for the Times," Vol. II., of which, pp. 93-109 contain a somewhat full argument based on Rom. vi. 1-6. He says, p. 93, "Now all, unquestionably, that a large number of Christians, at the present day, find, in this passage, is that baptism represents (as it does) to us our profession, that we, having been baptised, and having acknowledged Christ as our Lord, are bound to lead a new and godly life, and to be crucified to sin and the world, as He was crucified for our sin; and, if so, that we shall rise with Him. This is very true, and is certainly in the passage; but the question is, Whether this be all? Whether St. Paul speaks only of duties entailed upon, and not also of strength imparted to, us? The Fathers certainly of the Christian Church,

educated in holy gratitude for their baptismal privileges, saw herein, not only the death unto sin, which we were to die, but that also which in CHRIST we had died, the actual weakening of our corrupt propensities by our having been baptised and incorporated into Christ; not the life only which we are to live, but the actual life, which, by baptism, was infused in us, and by virtue of which it is that many of us are now 'walking in newness of life,' are living in Christ. St. Paul speaks throughout of actual facts, which have taken place in us, and duties consequent upon them; and he sets, side by side, means of grace, which we have received and the holiness which we are thereby to strive to attain unto. 'We were all baptised into Christ'-i.e., into a participation of Christ, and His most precious death, and union with Him; 'we'-i.e., our old man, our corrupted selves, 'were buried with Him by baptism into death, that we also may walk in newness of life.' Again, 'we were planted in the likeness of His death—that we may be' of His resurrection. Again, 'our old man was crucified with Him,' 'that the whole body of sin might be destroyed.'"

"Now, in these pairs (so to speak) of gifts and duties, two things are at first sight observable:—(1), That (as indeed we shall have occasion to point out more extensively) St. Paul speaks throughout of these gifts as having taken place at a definite past time. Not only we 'were baptised,' but we 'were buried,' 'were planted,' 'were crucified;' those acts are in their fruits to live in us, but in themselves they are past, just as much as our baptism is, in which they took place, and wherein they were contained; he speaks not here of a present crucifixion, or even (as elsewhere) of a

past crucifixion continuing on to the present, 'whereby the world has been crucified (ἐσαύτρωται) to me, and I unto the world,' but of one wholly past, 'our old man was crucified with Him (συνεσταυρώθη); '(2), That a most intimate communion with these same acts in our Lord's own holy life and death is, by the original language conveyed. It were much to be buried, to be crucified with Him, like Him; but it is more to become partakers of His burial and crucifixion; to be (so to speak) co-interred, co-crucified; to be included in, wrapt-round, as it were, in His burial and crucifixion, and gathered into His very tomb; and this, he says, we were by baptism, transfused into His death (συνετάφημεν), implanted or engrafted into it (σύμφυτοι), our old man was thereby nailed to His very cross (συνεσταυρώθη). There is a marked identification with our Lord; and so, also, our walking in newness of life is not the result of any motive, however persuasive, but 'the power of His resurrection.' 'We were buried with Him by baptism unto death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also,' having died with Him, died through baptism in His death, having been buried with Him, and so (else were we not living) having been raised again with Him, having been reborn to a new life, should live in His new life imparted to us, 'should walk in newness of life.' The Apostle needed not then to express in words that we actually had been made partakers of His resurrection; he conveys more, in that he does not express it, for so he identifies it more with His resurrection 'through the glory of the Father."

We think these extracts should suffice to indicate

Dr. Pusey's view of this passage, and to set forth clearly the substance at least of the views of others who suppose, like him, that the Apostle here intends to express the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. We shall, therefore, deal with his words as giving as able and correct a view of the passage as can be found to support the doctrine of baptismal grace. In our reply, we may make the following remarks:-

1. Though Dr. Pusey gives, at least so far an exposition of his own, he puts the greatest emphasis, throughout his whole observations, on the writings of, not the earliest, but the later, Fathers of the Church. He certainly quotes from men of great name. However, we are not now treating of any such, but simply and solely of the writings of the New Testament. We are sorry that the errors of baptismal saving grace were so soon introduced into the Christian Church; but we are far from thinking Dr. Pusey and his followers, as well as so many writers of the English Church, should magnify the interpretation of the writers referred to, as if the nearer they were to apostolic times, the more correct they should be regarded as interpreters of the apostolic writings. The word and works of God are so far alike. They both contain a vast amount of truth; and they require long periods of time for their study and interpretation. We are accustomed, and that most justly, to regard, not the first, but the advanced, study and interpretation of the works of God, as most likely if not certainly to be the more correct. So Ptolemaic and Copernican or Newtonian Astronomy. And why should we not regard the later the more correct interpretation of the Word of God. An early mistake might lead to a whole series of errors, as we are assured, was

the case with respect to the nature and character of apostolic Christian baptism. This, to a great extent, was due to a most erroneous view of the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus, in which the words, "born of water and the Spirit," were very greatly abused, and continue to be so still, to lead to the great error of baptismal regeneration; whereas, we are assured, they did not refer to Christian water baptism, but to the new birth or the regeneration absolutely needed in order to an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, of which Christ was alone speaking. We assume the truth of this, not because we have dealt with the conversation referred to, but because we cannot doubt that, when we do deal with it, we shall have sufficient reason for so assuming in the interpretation of all those passages, in treating of which Dr. Pusey and all who regard the words of Christ as directly referring to baptism, even make more or less direct use of them

2. Dr. Pusey, evidently mistaking the Apostle's meaning, as also the meaning of such expositors as Dr. Morison, and mixing the ideas of the state of justification to which reference is in the first place alone intended, with that of sanctification to which reference is in the second place immediately afterwards logically made, fails to see and express the real deadness to sin which is declared to be thoroughly inconsistent with the believer's continuing in sin or living in it. With his view of baptismal grace, he regards the Spirit as doing the whole work in the case of the infant as in the case of the adult, and therefore apart from the instrumentality of the truth as received and held by faith in Jesus Christ. This prevents him and all who hold like views of baptism, from seeing the real place of faith in

the Christian system, and especially from perceiving that the genuine faith, which ought to precede apostolic baptism, actually implies or contains all the blessings which are supposed to be implied or contained in baptism. Hence,

3. We maintain, that Paul here alludes to the baptism, which followed faith universally at that time, and which could not possibly convey the blessings contended for, but could at furthest only symbolise or represent them, and that because the faith, into which believers were baptised, as we have said, already implied or contained them. Nor does this, by any possible means, set aside the grand work of the Holy Spirit. That work had been effected before the real or Apostolic baptism could rightly be administered or received. Let this be clearly kept in view. Faith is everywhere regarded in Scripture as a work of grace, the grace of the Holy Spirit. Now in inspiring true or saving faith in Christ Jesus, what does the Spirit actually accomplish? Most certainly, a living union of the believer with the Divine Redeemer. Dr. Morison and Mr. Guthrie deem that the baptism of the Spirit. We see no reason why the converting grace might not be joined to the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, and thus called the baptism of the Holy Spirit; but for some sufficient reason or reasons, the Holy Spirit, has not, or, we may say, Christ has not, seen proper so to speak, as we have already set forth, but we find it clearly represented, that faith or repentance or both, the work of the Spirit, as first, and water baptism next; whilst to them who believed and were baptised, the promise was given, and, in due time, fulfilled of the special work or baptism of the Holy Spirit, and that not to convert those who had

believed and were baptised before, but to give them the needed power from on high to carry on the great work of the conversion of others, through the Spirit, to Jesus Christ. Before baptism, then, faith, wrought by the Spirit, was as we have as yet found throughout the New Testament, everywhere pre-supposed,—and, as we have just said, implied a living union with Christ. Christ is thus in the believer and he is in Christ. Into this faith, this real, living, spiritual oneness, he is baptised, with, therefore a baptism which does not create it, as it goes before, but represents, symbolises, acknowledges, professes it; so that, when Paul says, that the Roman Christians were baptised into Christ, he meant that they were baptised into the faith which unites to Christ and so represents the union, or rather oneness with Christ which that faith implies. Then, as we carry out what else the same faith implies or contains, we see what else the baptism, which follows, also implies, such as oneness with Christ in life, death, resurrection,—in fact, in all that Dr. Pusey holds to come from baptism. Whilst leaving the passage which most resembles this, or seems to all intents identical with it, for future consideration—viz., Col. ii. 12, we may here point to the fact that Paul, instead of tracing the resurrection as Dr. Pusey does to the baptism of the Christian, traces it, as we have been maintaining, to the faith of the Christian, though in some sense, even that, to which we have been alluding, is said to take place in baptism :- " Having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God who raised Him from the dead." (See 1 Peter iii. 21, 22.) Here the real origin of the co-resurrection is declared, not to

be the baptism, but to be the faith of the baptised. The same is to be most firmly held to be the meaning of the same Apostle in this virtually same statement.

4. Let us, then, more carefully consider the words of Dr. Pusey as to the precious blessings flowing from Christian baptism, as he maintains, but originating in

Christian faith, as we maintain:

Pp. 94, 95. "Now, in 'these pairs' (so to speak) of gifts and duties, two things are, at first sight, observable: -(1.) That St. Paul speaks throughout of these gifts as having taken place at a definite past time, Not only we 'were baptised,' but we 'were buried,' 'were planted,' were crucified;' those acts are in their fruits to live in us, but in themselves they are past. just as much as our baptism is, in which they took place, and wherein they were contained; he speaks not here of a present crucifixion, or even (as elsewhere) of a past crucifixion, continuing on to the present, 'whereby the world has been crucified (ἐσταύρωται) to me, and I unto the world,' but of one wholly past, 'our old man was crucified with Him (συνεσταυρώθη)." With much of this, apart from all reference to baptism, one may fairly agree. We hold that, as we have said already, all these are supposed to be possessed, through faith in Christ, by every one, not only before baptism, but before he is, through that faith, qualified for baptism, or can be a proper subject of baptism. All these have assuredly taken place in some one definite past; that past being the time when Christ was sincerely and truly received by faith, that is, faith by which the believer, as we have said, becomes one with Christ, is "identified, with his Lord," as Dr. Pusey says of baptism, and so one with Him in His life, death,

resurrection, and future life and glory. All this oneness with Christ is supposed to be possessed and professed by every one about to be baptised, and to be set forth, represented, and symbolised by his baptism. Nor does this imply two distinct origins and two different dates in the past, the one of faith and the other of baptism. The real origin and date of the new birth, as said, are to be found in faith, the gift of God, and in that alone—that faith into which the baptism which follows is, and which, therefore, can only declare the pre-existence of that faith as it also declares the contents of that faith by representing them as imparted along with the faith represented. The things represented must be regarded as taking place at the time of the representing them; as we have already illustrated by a coronation. As soon as a king dies the proper heir is proclaimed king. and actually begins to reign; so that the real date of his reign is fixed at the time of his actual succession; and yet his coronation might not follow for months or years after, when he might be said to have been made or crowned king. Not at the true date, but at the date of what we may call his symbolised, his represented, his openly declared and professed accession to the kingdom and throne. Dr. Pusey, according to his views, would fix the date at the distinct past time of the coronation. We, with all who regard baptism as following and representing faith, or real union with Christ, would fix the date at the distinct earlier date of the death of the king and the actual succession of his rightful heir.

P. 95. Dr. Pusey goes on—"(2.) That a most intimate communion with these same acts in our Lord's own holy life and death is, by the original language, con-

veved. It were much to be buried, to be crucified with Him, like Him; but it is more to become partakers of His burial and crucifixion; to be (so to speak) co-interred, co-crucified; to be included in, wrapt round, as it were, in His burial and crucifixion, and gathered into His very tomb; and this, he says, we were by baptism." We need not quote more. We have shown that all here said is to be found in our faith in Christ as our Saviour, as our substitute, who lived for us, died in our stead, rose from the dead, and ever after lived to God. Every true Christian believes all this, receives all this, rejoices in all this, and, when duly baptised, is baptised into all this, and, in his baptism, professes to be one with Christ in the possession, the enjoyment, the new life, the Divine grace, every saving good implied in all this. To borrow our illustration—Every Christian is inwardly, spiritual, livingly, a born king by his first faith in Jesus Christ, and outwardly, formally, visibly, orderly, or by appointment of the King of kings, crowned a king by Christian baptism. Hence, what can hardly be too often or too decidedly declared as a law of the kingdom, or at least an infallible inference from it, we might rather say, a simple truism, regeneration before baptism excludes all baptismal regeneration.

III. Romans xi.—This chapter, which so far treats of the relation of the literal Israel of the Old Testament to the spiritual Israel of the New, is supposed to imply such a virtual identity as to form a real basis for the practice of infant baptism. We shall endeavour to deal with all those statements of the Apostle as may enable us to come to a fair and proper conclusion; passing over what may not interfere with the course of

our interpretation and argument, and simply making the following observations:—

Ist. This chapter really contains a most valuable reply to the apparent announcement, at the close of the preceding, that, because of their almost universal rejection of their long-promised and expected Messiah, Israel, as a people, had been fully and finally cast off by their covenant God. Hence we find—

2nd. The Apostle goes on, "I say, then, Did God cast off His people. Far be it. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God did not cast off His people, which He foreknew." This is a first and sufficient proof that what he had said could not mean that God had so cast them off; as, if he had, then he himself, being one of them, must have been cast off too, as he, an Apostle, could not possibly admit.

3rd. Paul then adds another illustration from the past history of Israel, when, in the time of Elijah, there was an almost universal defection, and when there seemed as many guilty of rejecting Jehovah, their God, as there appeared at this very time guilty of the rejection of Jesus, their own Messiah. "Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elijah? . . . I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so, then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." If the nation had at any time, in the past or the present, been fully and finally cast off, then there could have been no such remnant as that here referred to, or as that often referred to in Scripture.

We have already treated of the separation of this race from all the other races of the world, for great

purposes and with special promises. In a high and important sense, this peculiar separation, implying an unalterable election of God, often declared to be due to special Divine love to the Fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, could never cease. The entire race could never perish, or be fully and finally cast off—not because the promise was absolutely unconditional. Individually, any one failing to resemble Abraham in faith, could not retain a continued right to protection. Circumcision gave no such right unless that faith was possessed, or unless "the circumcised also walked in the steps of the faith which Abraham had in uncircumcision," All inherited a high position, because of their relation to the patriarchs, from which, however, they could fall through unbelief, but from which no Gentile race could fall, because no other had been raised to it. In this way, not only many, but almost all, again and again lost their covenant position, and were actually cut off. Hence the terrible punishment of the desert, as also not a few minor punishments throughout their history. Above all, how vast and awful the Babylonish captivity! and now the dispersion among the nations, the very excision here alluded to! Still, the covenant promise could not, and cannot fail. God has had, and still has, as Paul says, "a remnant according to the election of grace," a part possessing the Abrahamic faith, and thus preserving the Abrahamic race. We repeat, the individual might be cut off because of unbelief; but the race could not perish, because "a remnant" would ever be maintained "according to the election of grace." Other nations could rise and stand only by faith; but, if any of them lost their faith, they could claim no such promise, and so such certainty of perpetual or continued existence.

We might, indeed, have inferred that when the grand end of the separation was accomplished in the birth and mission of the Promised Seed of Abraham and Saviour of the world, we had no further reason to suppose that the race might not merge into the mass of the other races of mankind. Paul here clearly indicates the reverse. However many the branches cut off, the faithful remnant can never perish. Others will yet, through faith, be renewed, and thus "grafted into their own olive tree," the tree of which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were the Divinely created and implanted, preserved and cherished root. Long and terribly has this unbelieving race been cut off, and suffered more than any other. Almost all seem hardened beyond measure, and banished from the home of their fathers. Here Paul proves himself a true prophet or a truly inspired interpreter of the prophets or of the everlasting Covenant of Abraham on the one hand, and of Jesus Christ on the other

Hence his words: "For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive-tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which are the natural [why only natural?] (branches) be grafted into their own olive-tree? For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery... that a hardening, in part, hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, 'There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and this is My Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins'" (vers. 24–27).

We have here a wonderful disclosure of the future

and all along the course of these eighteen centuries, true to the facts of history. First, Nearly all Israel had virtually ceased to be the recognised children of believing Abraham, or true people of God. Secondly, They were to continue in this sad condition of unbelief and opposition to their own Messiah for a long indefinite period, even till, to no small extent, the Gentiles had been converted to the God of Abraham, and richly blessed through the Messiah whom they had so rejected. Thirdly, Yet they were destined to be so won back by Divine grace, and through the instrumentality of Gentile believers in Christ, that it might be said, that not only great multitudes, but even the whole people, "all Israel shall be saved." All has not yet been fulfilled: but so much has been so, that we may be well assured of the end from the nature and extent of the beginning. Fourthly, We are the further confirmed in this assurance by two prophecies, which Paul has finely, combined in one, by which we are enlightened as to the final restoration and glory of Israel: the one "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for Me, this (is) My Covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever" (Isa. lix. 20, 21). The other, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day (that) I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this (shall be) the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). That these are really one and the same covenant is evident from this, that they relate to the same future of Israel, that the spirit is to rest on generation after generation, and that, in the second, the very thing is promised, which it is the part of the spirit of the first actually to do. Not only so, but though called new in comparison of the Mosaic and temporal, it is really the old, the Abrahamic, the spiritual, the universal, and the everlasting, in fact, also the Christian, which, in one external form or another, is at once the oldest and the newest, and, as we have said, the spiritual, the universal, and the everlasting. This may be clearly seen from various passages, especially 2 Cor. iii. 6 and Heb. x. 16, 17. It is carefully noted: "This is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins," or, "and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

We need not pursue the general interpretation as we have reached the point of dispute between Baptists and Pædobaptists. The real question relates to the good olive tree, which the writer uses illustratively of the true people of God, whether as the spiritual seed of

Abraham or as the believers in Jesus Christ. As used in support of the doctrine of infant baptism, the good olive tree is supposed to represent Abraham, the father of the faithful, and his descendants in the line of Isaac and Jacob; and not only so, but also because children were circumcised, this oneness involves a corresponding authority for the baptism of the children of Christian parents. If the people of God, as members of the Christian Church, stood in precisely the same covenant relation to God as did not only the father of the faithful and his children by like faith, but also the general race of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, the inference would seem logical and conclusive. But so far from this being the case, they had no covenant to look back upon as giving their children, or to parents in behalf of their children, any peculiar right or privilege whatever. As Paul expressly says, Gentile churches, parents included, "Stand by faith." Unlike believing parents of the peculiar people, until they actually believed, neither they nor their children stood in any covenant relation to God at all, unless in that grand covenant relation in which God stands to all the children of Adam without distinction or exception. He has given Christ to be "a covenant to the people," to all people, parents, and children alike, to secure all the blessings of salvation on the one and only condition of simple acceptance, or on that of the simple faith which made them the children of believing Abraham, and true branches of the one and only good olive tree, destined, like the little stone cut out without hands which has been growing into a great mountain, also to grow, till it shall fill the whole earth. Now it is almost entirely Gentile, as it once was all but

entirely Israelitish; but whilst it shall henceforth be Christian, it will never cease to be Abrahamic.

With all this essential unity of the covenant of Divine and saving grace, we must not overlook the external forms which it has assumed in the successive and progressive dispensations of it. Whilst we are simply told of the pro-evangelic announcement in the form of a promise of "the seed of the woman," we are afterwards informed of God saying of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, "with him I will establish My covenant," the same covenant of Divine and saving grace, all through from first to last, till, in fact, the essentially one covenant is prophetically and sublimely announced by Isaiah:-"Behold My servant whom I uphold; Mine elect (in whom) My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. . . . I, the Lord, have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." The everlasting tree, we may now call it the True vine, was really planted, in Eden just lost by the sin of Adam, in this first promise of the seed of the woman, the second Adam, the second head of mankind; the first faith in this first and only and everlasting Gospel of the blessed God and of the Saviour of the World, constituting those who received it really the absolutely true root of the tree representative of the entire people of God of all the ages of the world. That first promise declared that our first parents and their posterity were under the saving mercy and grace of God for their own salvation, that He was the God of all without exception and without distinction, the very

sun which continued to shine upon them daily proclaiming His goodness in order to their repentance and salvation; and their becoming entitled to His actual care and salvation on the one and only condition of accepting or not rejecting Him as the God which this promise revealed Him to be. Now we soon find a difference more or less appeared between those who accepted and those who rejected, between the Cains and the Abels of the opening race of mankind, between the whole as a race of the covenant of universal promise and privilege, and that part of it, "the remnant according to the election of grace," the actually restored children of God. Thus we find what the early Gospel distinguishes as the "seed of the woman" and "the seed of the serpent," or, as we would now say in common parlance, "the Church and the world." The children and the parents were alike under the same providence of the God of the first Gospel. All were equally free to the great covenant or promise of salvation. The essential blessings of salvation were of universal personal right to the children of all parents alike, whether these were good or bad, the good simply conveying the Gospel of their salvation, and through grace securing their salvation; and the bad simply neglecting their duty, and thus, so far as they were considered, risking the highest welfare of their families. Still the rights of the children were not unreal or non-existent. The kingdom of God or of heaven was theirs at any time for reception, with all its blessings, its Gospel, its rights and privileges, its promises and final inheritance, all of which belonged to all by the gift of God, whether already accepted and so actually possessed or yet neglected, but still

for their acceptance. All are born with this gifted right to the kingdom, or to the everlasting blessings of the kingdom referred to. Of all children, as of the children of Adam to whom the first promise was made, it might have been said, "theirs is the kingdom of heaven," or "to them belongs the kingdom of heaven or of God," or, as Jesus actually said of those brought to Him, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." As we have hinted at not because of their direct connection with their parents, or even because of the character or goodness of their parents, but alone by their common and original connection with their first parent to whom the one universal and everlasting promise or Gospel had been established. Whilst all this is assuredly true and most precious, no mark or sign, far less seal of this primitive covenant, was appointed to show forth any special right or peculiarity on the part of the children of any parents, good or bad. Did this show any want or imperfection as to the arrangement of parents and children? Did God provide less real good for children then than in aftertimes?-in the times of Abraham and his posterity, in the times of Christ and Christians? Or are we not rather right in concluding, with Baptists, no more has been provided, and no more is now needed, in these latter times than we have just found was provided under the first promise to Adam and his posterity? Let it at least be pondered as well as noted, that under the primitive dispensation of Divine Grace, no sign or symbol of any connection of parent and child was appointed by Him who originated it. We have suggested one key to this, namely, that the real parental bond was not so much that between parents and children as that between

the race, parents and children alike; and father Adam, who, we may assume, was the Father of the Faithful, long before Abraham was chosen to be such a model, and so named, for after times. But this is not all. In those early days all were of one Father, all formed one race, all were under the same covenant and the same God: there was no room for ritual or symbolic distinction between child and child, between child and parent: all were one in their father Adam by race, and all were one in their right to the universal promise of grace and salvation. No symbol was appointed because no one was needed, and no parent could know or feel any want or loss because of its absence. But what became of this first good olive tree, which we have also called the true vine? Ah! Through unbelief and sin and departure from the God of Revelation, of Providence, of Salvation, the branches were broken off, the living branches became few, and, if all things had continued as they were, all of them would have withered and perished; but this God would not permit; "a remnant" must be preserved "according to the election of grace;" and consequently we find God complaining and threatening to cut off all the unbelieving, all the mass of the branches, and saying, "It repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. vi. 6-8). "And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh. . . . But with thee will I establish My covenant," &c. (chap. vi. 17, 18). "And

God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that (is) with you. . . . And I will establish My covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood. . . . And God said, This (is) the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that (is) with you, for perpetual generations: I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. . . . And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that (is) upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This (is) the token of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that (is) upon the earth" (chap. ix. 8-17). Here we have a new form of the one Promise or of the old covenant inclusive indeed of the preserving care of the whole life of the world, but having special and almost exclusive reference to the preserved portion, or almost all, of the human race. Here Noah is constituted at once a second head of the human family, and a new root of the true tree representative of the imperishable family of God. We might repeat all we have said of the root which we found in penitent and believing Adam and Eve, such as we think we have reason to believe they became. Now the renewed covenant has a grand token, at once beautiful and appropriate: as also most suitable to all, parents and children alike, and giving a frequent proclamation in the Heavens and in all the earth to all the children of the second father of mankind. But what is that token? One relating to all flesh of every kind; yet so far as the relation of children to their immediate parents is concerned, we have no mark, sign, or token whatever. In this respect the newer race of Noah resembles the older race of Adam. Why? Just because there was no discrimination to be marked as to any two classes of children. All children had the same promises and privileges, to be received or rejected, to be granted to all children, however wicked and godless their parents for any number of generations. Here, as in the case of Adam, the covenant was made with one Father, so related to his entire family that all were treated alike, and no reason could therefore be assigned for any mark of distinction. Nor, doubtless, did any of the children suffer loss from the want of it.

How fared it with this renewed tree representing the people of God? Just as did the original. Almost all the numerous branches were cut off, and that through unbelief: only "a remnant according to the election of grace" was found to preserve the perennial stock. The rest had in some sense been removed, not by such a destruction as in the previous case. They had at last nearly all departed from the Noaic covenant-God. Idolatry had become universal. They became divided into numerous tribes and nations. The earth had become spiritually almost a desert, with apparently but one oasis in the midst of it. To return to the Apostolic figure, the tree was denuded of nearly all its branches. Only "a very small remnant" survived. Out of all the races of mankind, one, and only one, was selected and separated from the rest, to the head of which, Abraham, the father of the faithful, Jehovah said, as to Adam and to Noah: -"With thee will I establish My covenant," the old and only one, "and with

thy seed after thee in their generations, to be a God unto thee and unto them." So again with Isaac and with Jacob: he and they forming virtually a third root of the tree, representative of the people of God in all time. But how should the people be distinguished from all the other peoples of the world? Now there is room for some mark of distinction, as a modification of each of the earlier covenants, it might be called a new covenant, the Abrahamic, and that between Jehovah and the whole Abrahamic race, through Isaac and Jacob. That whole race was to be marked off as it was to be specially blessed and used for the good of the other and fallen races of the world. The sign or token of this racial covenant was circumcision, with all its special import and promises. The mark was the mark of the race. It was applied to all the male members of the race alike, and without exception. It was rightly attached to the very youngest, because all belonged by birth: and all had God for their God from their birth. Certainly it was not because of their immediate parentage that they were marked out for any covenant favour, or care, or privilege, or blessing; but simply and solely because they were the children of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There never was so much as one single legal case of circumcision because of mere connection with the immediate father, however good, believing, excellent, but only because, as we have said, real connection with Abraham, the covenant head. Nor was ever a circumcision legally prevented because of the unbelief or even open wickedness of the father. The words of the covenant are not, "I will be a God to thee and thy infant children after thee," but "I will be a God unto thee and thy children after thee and that in

their generations." They may live to despise the covenant, and the God of the covenant; and to make themselves liable to be cut off, as corrupt branches, from the tree representing the covenant people. Of course, they might repent and believe, and be restored or reengrafted into the good tree from which they had been for a season broken off. We are here specially to remember what we have already carefully pointed to, that Abraham was 'a father of circumcision to those who were not only of the circumcision, but also walked in the steps of the faith which Abraham had in uncircumcision.' Circumcision, therefore, did no more and no less than declare the privileges or advantages of the circumcised, old and young alike, no one child rather than another, no child because of any special relation to one father rather than another; but all parents and all children, as the children, the descendants, the common race of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

All the race, then, had the most precious rights and privileges, were heirs by birth, of the very kingdom of heaven, that kingdom which Jesus declared would be taken from them, and which could not have been so taken unless previously given and possessed, and which would be given to another, bringing forth the fruits thereof, that is to say, the people of His day possessed the kingdom which they ought to have really accepted and used aright, but which by neglecting, to the rejection of God and His service and glory, would in point of advantages, &c., be given to those who would appreciate and gladly use and enjoy them, just as we find of the unbelieving Israelites and the believing Gentiles of this very chapter. The former were cut off: The latter were grafted in. When the former

come to believe they will be welcomed back to favour and joyfully "grafted into their own olive tree;" whilst the latter were grafted in among the branches of that tree, on the ground of faith alone, and continued to be branches on it only as they continued to stand by faith. Here we may note a very simple distinction between having a gifted or inherited right to a thing and having that thing in actual possession. In the one case we may have the right and yet never use the right by actually taking and so having in possession. So long as people, young or old, under any dispensation of grace, continue alive, the salvation of God, the kingdom of heaven, in one or other of its forms, belongs by right of gift to them, however wicked they may be, so that they may make it theirs in possession by free acceptance, an acceptance which the Giver demands. To all, old or young, in this sense of Divine gifted right, the kingdom is theirs, it belongs to them, and in this sense, it may be truly said "of all children, or of all such is the kingdom of heaven;" so that Christ was uttering no mysterious or dark, but most precious, truth, when He used those words as to the children brought to Him. For, doubtless, those words were true of all children, of every age, and under every dispensation of Divine and saving grace. So far as children are concerned, they cannot differ as to privilege at any time; so that we may believe that, if they do not live to lose their covenant and universal birth-right, they will not be deprived of it by an early and sinless death. As we have regarded all the successive and progressive covenants as essentially but one and the same covenant, what could be truly said by Christ under one dispensation, could be as truly said under any other, and that

without any sign or token under the third and fourth any more than under the first and second, under Adam and Noah.

We now come to the fourth and last or Christian dispensation of Divine mercy and grace. As we find in this important chapter, the covenant children of Abraham, or people of God, had corrupted themselves, lost the faith of their fathers, and, in rejecting their own Messiah, had cut themselves off, had been cut off, from their own olive tree. Paul tells us that this does not mean lost for ever, or without hope of returning. A remnant had been saved. That remnant, with a perfected faith, formed the new tree, to which all believers in Christ, all sons of Abraham by faith, were added as living and true branches. The one true and everlasting covenant, now established in Christ Jesus, not in behalf of any one race, such as even that of Abraham, but in behalf of the whole human race, without distinction or exception, there was again no need and no reason for any special sign or token, no further reason for the distinguishing sign of circumcision; this one old and yet new covenant in Christ being thus for the one whole and undivided race; every birth, without mark or ceremony, telling of itself, that one of the race of which Christ was the Covenant-Head, had entered the world, with all the covenant or Gospel blessings belonging to all alike, young or old, freely to be appropriated by the reception of Christ for sure and certain salvation, or to be sinfully neglected with equally sure and certain final condemnation and ruin. We repeat, there was no distinction between child and child, emphatically none between the children of one class of parents and those of another, so far as the covenant itself was concerned, however vastly different they were, and could not but be, according to training they might thus receive. To say, then, that circumcision gave a covenant or federal right because of their connection with their parents which was not included in, or identified with, the common rights due to the covenant blessings of the race, and from which children would be deprived, if no special token were applied, is just to imagine a loss where there was nothing to lose, to demand a continuation of something like, or equivalent to, what was never existent. What, then, should Christian parents do? Just what all parents used to do, even to regard their children as under the same dispensation as themselves, with all the gifted blessings which they can claim and have claimed for themselves; and rejoice with joy unspeakable in that these children enter the world with so rich and glorious an inheritance, which God has given before they were born, and which it is the grand concern and work to do all in their power, and with the grace of God, to lead these precious, and yet helpless heirs of God and of heaven, to the knowledge of the truth, and to accept, and retain, and to use to the glory of God, and their own early, and continued, and eternal salvation. Why, then, if no sign or ceremony is now to be applied to children, should there be any sign or token at all? All is very simple and appropriate. Not only may it mark a real difference between adults when there can be no such difference among children—between all led to believe and be actually saved by appropriating the blessings gifted to all from their childhood, and all led by persistent neglect to remain destitute of the same gifted blessings to their terrible destruction. When we come to treat of all who believe in Christ, or, as it is said, "are Christ's," and so "Abraham's children, and heirs according to the promise," we shall once more see the oneness of the tree of which all, Jew and Gentile, are the living branches, and that while children have all right to the promises, just as all the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had, they have to believe like Abraham, that they may be like the same patriarch, justified by faith, and made to possess the blessings promised, and actually become children of God and heirs of salvation. When, therefore, unbelieving Israelites come to believe in Christ, they will all find that in being grafted into their own Messianic, they are at the same time grafted into their own Abrahamic tree.

IV. Mark x. 13-16; 1 Cor. vii. 10-14; Eph. vi. 1-4.

—We propose now to consider the force of these important passages as directly bearing on the question of baptism, and in which the case of young children is

directly referred to.

(i.) Mark x. 13-16. "And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: And (His) disciples rebuked those that brought (them). But when Jesus saw (it), He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them."

Of all the scenes of word-painting, no one excels in point of beauty and tenderness, of instruction and consolation, this simple narrative of Christ and His treatment of these little ones. No one can fail to admire and sympathise. No parent can contemplate the

picture without emotion, or without a lofty conception of the Spirit of the Divine Redeemer, or of His superhuman knowledge of the mysteries of human life. We are told of nothing distinguishing the children actually brought to Him from the poorest and least noticeable children to be found elsewhere; and yet He seems to regard them and speak of them as of equal rank with more than the kings and queens of the world, even with the very angels of light. No one ever spoke so to the hearts of parents, or so to inspire them with the loftiest conception of their office, as if hearing with their very ears the voice of God, saying to each, "Take this child and nurse it for Me, and I will give thee thy wages."

Certainly, if any mark or ceremony were needed or fitted to encourage the parent or to do good to the child, we may rest assured it would not be found wanting. Only we may be as certain that, unless seen by the Divine Father Himself to be for the best, no such mark or ceremony could possibly be appointed, so that all ought to accept the presence or absence of such as an unerring proof of the Divine will and wisdom, which it would be the greatest presumption to neglect.

We need not say that it has been long and often held that a clear and undoubted inferential basis for the practice of infant baptism may be found in the words of Jesus, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The inference may seem to fall in with the natural feelings of the parental heart. It may also appear to consist with the token of the older economy. And very many regard the entrance of a redeemed immortal into this world, and here declared by the Redeemer Himself to be of the kingdom of heaven, without some such sign

of welcome to be a decided want in the very constitution of the visible kingdom. In fact, all nature is held to be violated by such a want of a most express recognition of the birth of one thus welcomed and treated by the Son of God.

However, we must be careful lest we are found preferring the wisdom of our own feelings to that of the perfect mind and will of God. We know, at least, and for certain that the practice of infant baptism has been the means of misleading almost the whole Church for many generations, or of making a supposed Divine ordinance a source of the most tremendous evils to even the world at large, and, we must say, to parents and children alike, for whose benefit that supposed ordinance has been held to be of the highest use, in this way teaching us the importance of the rule of wisdom already suggested, namely, that of doing nothing without the assured sanction of the Divine wisdom and will.

Let us, then, endeavour to find out the real import of this passage.

1. We are told that the children were brought to Jesus that "He should touch them;" we may say that He should bless them, doubtless leaving Him to do as He deemed proper. Certainly, no thought of baptism is here expressed or indicated. Nay, He was not known to baptise except by His disciples: and if they were accustomed to baptise children, we cannot suppose them to have so forbidden them. If He had been wont to encourage infant baptism, they would never have so interfered; and He would have had no reason to have so defended Himself by using the words, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." They, then, were

brought, neither for baptism, nor in such a way as to suggest to the disciples the idea of baptism. They were brought at the impulse of the kindest and best feeling, and were met by Christ in the most befitting and tender manner, "taking them up in His arms, putting His hands upon them, and blessing them." We are told "He was much displeased," and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." So He tenderly spoke. Nor could He give better counsel for all parents for all time to come—the grand work of such being to do all prayerfully and perseveringly to bring them to Christ, and to lead them to accept, to love, and to obey Him; and, in the words which follow, giving the highest possible reason and motive for so doing, even the glorious fact that, of all these little children, He could so wonderfully say, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven"

2. Let us, then, consider the import of these words. In doing so, we must keep in mind the circumstances in which they were uttered. The fact that infant circumcision is now supposed to be rightly followed by infant baptism, gives a mistaken force and meaning to these words which they would not have had, should lead us to be careful, lest we unconsciously add such a force and meaning as at the time and to the disciples they by no means at all had. We must not forget that we have found nothing in proof, or even in favour, of infant baptism—nay, in proof, or in favour, of any sign or token of any special connection between children and their immediate parents. Nor is such so much as hinted at in the passage before us. What, then, can really be meant?

1st. Many, especially Baptists, regard Christ as here

pointing to a most important principle, which He seems to have delighted to express and illustrate, namely, as announced in this passage itself, "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." In this case, "such" would really mean "such-like." The words just quoted favour this latter view, as they point directly to likeness rather than to identity—to persons who humble themselves, and so become like little children, and not who are little children themselves. Especially do we find an illustration in Matt. xviii. 1-6, where Jesus is said to call a little child, and set him in the midst of His disciples, and say, "Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . . And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him," &c. Verse 10, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father, which is in heaven." Verse 14, "Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Here Jesus sets before them a real child, and then passes to "one such little child," which evidently meant "such-like little child," as may be clearly seen by what follows, "One of these little ones who believe in Me;" "little," not in themselves, but in their own eyes and before God, "poor in spirit," of whom Jesus says, as here, "theirs is the kingdom of heaven," or, as we may render, "To them belongs the kingdom of heaven." If this was the true or full meaning of the words, the reference would not be to young children at all, so far as the kingdom is concerned, but to people becoming, in some respect, like them, and yet actually believing in Christ, and thus as born again, and as having entered the kingdom. In this way, so far as the question of baptism is concerned, humble believers being meant, all difficulty would be removed, and all controversy ended, so far as this passage relates to it.

2nd. It is argued that, however important the truth thus held to have been intended, something more than likeness must have been meant, as it could not have been a sufficient reason for receiving actual children because these were in some respects little, not literally young ones, but children by faith, and who might be of any age, even of old age itself. Hence it has been long and often urged in reply, that doves might have been brought to Christ on the ground of likeness suggested by Himself, "be ye harmless as doves." We confess we have never been fully satisfied with the idea of mere likeness, as a reason for bringing those who resembled humble Christians, and not for bringing those personally and directly interested in the kingdom itself. Nor do we prefer the idea of 'such-like' to that of 'such,' even though it could consistently and without difficulty be entertained. We greatly prefer the fine and precious belief of all enlightened Christian parents, that all their children come into this world with a real Divine birthright, which may be lost, but which, if not forfeited or rejected by sin, will be enjoyed in the end, because taken possession of, in after years, by faith in Jesus Christ, or because it could not be lost by an early sinless death, which made acceptance impossible. On the supposition of continued life, there could be no

certainty of actual inheritance. Like that of Esau, it might come, as too often, to be despised and lost. All this by no means contradicts the sublime and awful words of Jesus to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." For—

3rd. God having placed the fallen race under the new economy, one of mercy and grace for their salvation, two things were needed for their actual salvation; a birth-right title to heaven; and a real fitness for heaven; and these the God and Father of all could alone supply. In doing so he provided the Divine title by the work of His Son as the great Redeemer, and the fitness by the work of His holy and gracious Spirit. The child comes into the world with the Divine title, which cannot be lost unless through sin, and therefore after the time of actual responsibility or capability of sinning. This passage assures us thus of the salvation of those who die in infancy, who have not lost their Divinely-gifted right. But, it may be said, what of their fitness? Must not the very youngest be born again? Assuredly. But the Holy Spirit can do for all, what He must do for any, if they are to be saved in early days. This passage, then, is far more cheering to parents by assuring them of such salvation than it could be by leading to infant baptism. Nay, by setting aside all such external sign and leading to an enlightened assurance of the dying child's salvation, it can give all possible comfort by this great declaration of Jesus Christ. Vastly more precious is this assurance of salvation than could be any inference, true or false, as to infant baptism, especially as we have yet found no reference to infant baptism, or to any mark unless that of race. and not of individual peculiarity.

4th. What, then, it may be asked, do we mean to say was the express import of the words, "of such is the kingdom of heaven"? We have said, that they imply a title to it, just as the birth of the eldest son of a king implies a title to the crown and throne of a kingdom. There may never be actual inheritance. Death may prevent. Bad conduct may prevent. Internal insurrection may prevent. External war may prevent. In this case early death would secure. Life with impenitence would prevent. Baptism could not secure, if the Divine title did not secure. We may say that the reference here seems clearly or certainly to be to the kingdom of God in heaven, rather than only and finally to the kingdom of God on earth. In Matt. xviii., Christ speaks of the angels, and so connects the children spoken of with heaven. The words, then, might mean no more than that 'such' are not to be despised, because 'such' young ones, not necessarily all, are actually in heaven, or, 'of such,' of these, and such-like as these is heaven made up, or, we prefer, of such, of all such, of these and others like these is the kingdom of heaven, just as we find in Matt. v. 3: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven," or, as the words may be grammatically rendered, "to them belongs the kingdom of heaven;" belongs by gift or right of God. This does not at all necessarily refer to any Church or Church standing and privileges, but to the whole rights and privileges of sons of God, within the whole kingdom of grace in this world, and the glory and blessedness of the kingdom of glory in the world to come. These possess the kingdom not only in gift, but also in fact, because they have faith in Christ, and so have actually received Him and it. Not so in the case of the little ones, who are incapable of

faith or reason. They have by Divine right of birth a title to all this, but they do not and cannot yet have it in possession any more than a young prince can have more than a title to his father's throne, or that throne in actual possession. But he can and ought to have all the privileges of an heir. He ought to have the standing, the treatment, and the training of a prince. And so of every child of man. However poor his parents, they have a right to regard him as an heir of God and of heaven; and they are bound to treat him and to train him as such. The whole Bible teaches us so to treat him. The grand work of his parents is to lead him to Christ in early life, and so to be joyfully assured of his actual possession as soon as they see reason for believing that, by faith in Christ, he has become in the higher sense a son and heir of God through Him. How glorifying this to every child of man! How glorious an assurance to every Christian parent! How well to be freed from any alarm or anxiety as to the next world, if the supposed needful ceremonial be wanting! How happy the enlightened conviction that no such ceremony was appointed in any of the first dispensations of grace, except in the only apparent one which pointed to the separation of a race for great, yet racial, purposes. Well may all rejoice to know that the highest dispensation of all under the great Redeemer Himself, proclaims the glorious right to a kingdom for every one born into the kingdom of grace; and so leads not only Christian parents to seek to lead their own children to Christ, but also has led Christ to teach Christians to seek to lead all people, old and young, in all lands, to Christ, and so to lead them to secure the actual possession of the kingdom, to which all have the gifted right to which

they are entitled, whether they make the proper use of it or not, for their own eternal salvation. When they come to believe, and can sincerely profess to have believed, then with real satisfaction and joy, all rightthinking people will rejoice in their second birth and actual entrance into the kingdom of God and of heaven. This wonderful passage especially addresses Christian parents, as we have said, at once magnifying the position of their children, and magnifying their own parental office, and also showing the real place of both in relation to the Christian Church, and indicates the part of both in connection with the great commission the parents discipling, or making disciples of their children—and the children being baptised when discipled. The words and example of Christ seemingly giving a beautiful basis for a believing and joyful and prayerful and Christian welcome of every born heir of God and of the kingdom of heaven. Such, we hold. ought to be the real effect of the perfect example and memorable words of the Divine Redeemer of mankind. Whilst all tells against His appointment of such an ordinance as that of infant baptism, by the anti-Christian introduction of which His only appointed baptism has been all but banished from the whole nominal Church. we feel assured that, in this, Jesus has left an example, in which all Scripturally baptised disciples would do well to follow in His steps. There can certainly be no harm, unless through some abuse, in bringing "little children," in the arms of parental faith and love, along with the devout thanksgivings and supplications of fellow-Christians, to Christ and to God, acknowledging at once the rich gift bestowed and all proprietary right on the part of the Author and Redeemer of the precious

life given, whilst the words and example of Jesus would exalt the child of the poorest and most obscure of parents to a rank above the nobles of the world, such a service would tend to impress the parents and all joining in it and interested in the recent birth, with the vast importance of parental training and example on the one hand, and of the deepest interest and purest influence of, not only the Church of the parents, but all Christians, with respect to the conversion and salvation of the young, on the other. Many complain of the rejection of infant baptism, as a great injury, nay, even a real cruelty to children. We have seen that Baptists are specially assured of the salvation of those dying in early days. Such a service as we have suggested and as not a few already practise, would just set forth the spirit and example of Christ, and at the same time, whilst leaving the true time and place for Christian baptism for the sole practice of Christians, would also leave the constitution of the Christian Apostolic Church in all the sublime simplicity and spirituality of its primitive perfection, and gradually prepare for the return of all the more or less erring communities to the one great Church of the twice-born, baptised in water into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and baptised with a universal and perpetual baptism into the unity and harmony, the love and power, of the Holy Spirit.

(ii.) 1 Cor. vii. 10-14. "And unto the married I command, (yet) not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to (her) husband: and let not the husband put away (his) wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any

brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

Here we find another passage in which children are expressly spoken of in such a way as, it is maintained, to imply a basis for the practice of infant baptism, especially in ver. 14, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife (R.V., in the wife), and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by (or, in) the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." We may quote thus from Mr. Guthrie's "Pædobaptist Guide," p. 166, "If this does not mean the union of parent and child in the new covenant such as existed under the old, I do not believe it possible to explain the text. The only other explanation worth noting is, that the 'holy' and 'unclean' here mean 'legitimate and illegitimate.' Certainly not in the ordinary use of the words." But may not a simple explanation be found, though Mr. Guthrie says he cannot find one. He proceeds, "The obvious meaning of the text is this, and vain are all attempts to escape from it,-Let not the believing husband put away the unbelieving wife, let not the believing wife leave the unbelieving husband, for in either case the believing element extends its sanctity to the household; were it otherwise your children, who now share that consecrated standing, would be left outside the Christian pale. The Jews applied the term 'unclean' to those outside their consecrated community, and 'holy' to those within it,—holy being often used in Scripture in this federal sense. The words are here transferred, as such words often are, to the Christian Church. But in that Jewish Church children had a recognised standing along with their parents, even if but one parent was Christian they were to have the like standing in the Christian Church. That status in the Jewish Church was expressed by infant circumcision: and the fair inference is that the same thing was signified in the Corinthian Church and in all the Apostolic Churches, by infant baptism." We shall consider the argument, here followed with great confidence as if no other could be maintained.

1st. We are told that, if the words do not imply a union of parent and child as under the old economy, the text cannot be explained. This would be no proof, as it might simply be too obscure for our explanation. But the Apostle, instead of affirming such a correspondence, as seems to be maintained, appears to reason on precisely the reverse. Under the old the unbelieving partner would have been treated as "common and unclean," as Peter would have then said, and so the believing partner would have deemed it a solemn conscientious duty to have separated from him or her as "unclean," whereas Paul under the new covenant, assures the person with scrupulous conscience that now it is different, and that no such uncleanness stands in the way of their continued conjugal union. Instead of being one and the same in this special respect, the two covenants are perfectly opposed. The unbelieving is sanctified by the believing, and so, to him or her. How? Paul tells us: "Some shall depart from the faith . . . forbidding to marry (and commanding) to abstain

from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe, and know the truth. For every creature of God (is) good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer" (1 Tim. iv. 3-5). It was not so under the old economy. It is so now. Both here and in our passage, Paul is meeting a somewhat similar difficulty, due to the imperfect knowledge, not of the oneness, but of the difference of the two covenants. The Apostle instructs the believing in both cases, and assures them, that the unbelieving is not unclean in relation to the conjugal life previously entered, but sanctified by the believing, and that no creature of God should be refused as unclean or ceremonially forbidden, but is good, being sanctified by the word of God and the prayer of the believing. In both cases everything accepted of God and treated accordingly, ought to be thus sanctified, acknowledged as a gift of God on the one hand, and proper use made a subject of prayer on the other. It seems to be forgotten that the sanctification of an unbeliever cannot mean his being made really holy, and can imply no more than clean or holy with respect to that of which Paul is speaking, just as the food which he says is sanctified or made holy for the purpose intended, namely, for eating or using as food. Let it be noted that the verb, "it is sanctified" means "it is made holy;" so that the unbelieving husband or wife is said as truly "to be made holy" as the children are said "to be holy." Therefore, if the kind of holiness of the child places it under, as Mr. Guthrie and many others maintain, the new covenant, the same kind of holiness must place the unbelieving parent under the

new covenant also. Not only so, but, suppose some of the children were of responsible age, would they fail to share in this domestic holiness, be then unclean, and so be required to part with the believing parent, or, if not, be so regarded as holy and entitled to a place under the new economy, and even within the New Testament Church? The force of the Apostle's argument, for it is more than an advice, is often at least unseen. He seems clearly to argue according to the procedure of some of the parents,-proposing to part with the parent and to retain the child; and he points to the inconsistency: if the parent is to be treated as unclean, the children must be treated as unclean also: but they are treated and retained as holy, and rightly so; for under this economy, the cause of all such uncleanness has been abolished, and, as Peter was directly taught of heaven, the believing parents were no longer to call anyone common or unclean. There was, therefore, no bar to the parents living together any more than to the parents and children. The case was very different in earlier times. The very nature of the old dispensation requiring a full separation of one peculiar race from all the other races of the world, necessitated a complete separation of families, and a strict law as to marriage, which pronounced all intermarriages with those of other nations forbidden as unholy, and the parties unclean. We find this emphatically illustrated in Ezra, ix. and x.; and in Nehemiah, x. and xiii, who found not a few who had violated the law by marrying those of other and heathen races, for which they were strongly censured, and required to separate themselves from such, and even from the children of such marriages. Thus and otherwise we need not wonder that all such

marriages might easily come to be regarded as unlawful, and a question arise for the Apostle to solve with all the light of more unerring wisdom. And he does so, in a way which ought to have been satisfactory, but which proved the parents' and the children's perfect right to continue under the same undivided roof, but which disclosed no such right of either parent or child, referred to any special right to the blessings of the new covenant, far less to a place within the Church of Jesus Christ. In fact, the Apostle, in dealing with the question was not treating of that covenant at all.

2nd. Mr. Guthrie goes on: "The only other explanation worth noticing is that 'holy' and 'unclean' here mean legitimate and illegitimate. Certainly Paul could not think so as he held by legitimacy, and recommended the parties to continue to live as before. They would not suppose a violation of any civil or Roman law, but of the law of separation to which we have referred. It is further said, as others had said before, that 'the believing element extends its sanctity to the household: were it otherwise your children, who now share that consecrated standing, would be left outside the Christian pale." This tends to conceal the real idea intended. The meaning is that the holiness of the believing removes the uncleanness of the unbelieving; the reverse of the old law, as seen in Haggai ii. 11-13. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; ask now the priests (concerning) the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it

be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean." Here the holy cannot make the unclean holy; but the unholy can make the holy unclean. The unclean partner cannot make the holy unclean; but the holy can make the unclean holy. Thus we have by this false interpretation a reversal of the economy which is accounted identical with it.

3rd. Once more, he adds, "The Jews applied the term 'unclean' to those outside the consecrated community, and 'holy' to those within it—holy, being often used in Scripture in this federal sense. The words are here transferred—as such words often are to the Christian Church. But in that Jewish Church children had a recognised standing with their parents, even if but one parent was Christian, they were to have the like standing in the Christian Church. That status in the Jewish Church was expressed by infant circumcision; and the fair inference is that the same thing was signified in the Corinthian Church, and in all the Apostolic Churches by infant baptism." Why, it was natural that all Jews separated as holy to the Lord should come to treat all others as unclean, as we find them always proudly and erroneously doing; but as soon as the time and reason of the racial separation came to an end, all the other races rose to the same level; and, as Peter was informed, no one was henceforth to be called "common or unclean;" and therefore all were now to be regarded as clean, and in that sense, not in the full or spiritual sense-holv. A federal sense was not implied in the case in hand. The sanctified parent and the sanctified child were in the same sense, holy; parents and children all holy and none unclean to one another. Certainly, no one acquainted with the New Testament constitution of a Christian Church would admit either such a sanctified heathen parent or such a sanctified unconverted child to all the privileges of membership. Here all is domestic and personal, none special and federal.

4th. Bengel has quoted Lev. xix. 24, as illustrative of the meaning of the word "holy," as here applied to these children: "But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the Lord (withal)." In this case these children would be viewed as like all children, devoted or consecrated by the Christian parent or parents to the Creator, Redeemer, and God of all, and so to be taught and led to Jesus, to whom they assuredly belong, and thus, according to the great commission, and as we have already said, discipled to Christ, and when they are so to be duly and in proper time baptised into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Here to come to what is assuredly right for all parents.— They need no commission to do this as a first and foremost parental work. Every child cannot but belong to Christ and God; and there could be no wrong in calling on their friends and Christian neighbours to unite with them in thanksgiving for the precious gift, and in supplicating all the aids of sovereign grace in blessing their endeavours and crowning all with the unspeakable blessing of a second and more precious and glorious birth. By all means let every birth be thus followed by a most suitable and unexceptionable service of dedication to God to whom all belong. Thus would the spirit of our passage be carried out, and parents and children would most

fitly "be sanctified to one another." But let no birth be followed by a baptism, which ought never go before the true and holy second birth.

We may add that those who favour infant baptism are usually led to think this passage favourable to it. If the fact that circumcision was the sign of the separation of the race for special purposes is not clearly kept in view, and was to be set aside when the entire human race was brought within the bond of the New Testament covenant of the second Adam or new head of mankind this erroneous view is the more likely to be entertained. But it has not been always the case. So highly esteemed a commentator as Meyer has taken a stand on the opposite side, 1 Cor. vii. 14: "Had the baptism of Christian children been then in existence, Paul could not have drawn this inference, because in that case the arioths of such children would have had another basis. That the passage before us does not even contain an exegetical justification of infant baptism is shown in the remarks on Acts xvi. 15 (against De Wette, Neander, Olshausen, Osiander, and the older expositors). Neither is it the point of departure from which almost of necessity Pædobaptism must have developed itself; such a point is rather to be found in the gradual development of the doctrines of original sin." We may also quote as just referred to, Acts xvi. 15: "καὶ ὁ οἶκος αὐτῆς. Of what members her family consisted cannot be determined. This passage and ver. 33, with xviii. 8, and 1 Cor. i. 16 are appealed to in order to prove infant baptism in the apostolic age, or at least to make it probable. . . . But on this question the following remarks are to be made: (1) If in the Jewish and Gentile families which were converted to Christ there were children, their baptism is to be assumed in those cases, when they were so far advanced that they could and did confess their faith on Jesus as the Messiah; for this was the universal, absolutely necessary qualification for the reception of baptism; comp. also vers. 31, 32, 33, xviii. 8. (2), If, on the other hand, there were children still incapable of confessing, baptism could not be administered to those to whom that, which was the necessary pre-supposition of baptism for Christian sanctification, was still wanting. (3), Such young children, whose parents were Christians, rather fell under the point of view of 1 Cor. vii. 14, according to which, in conformity with the view of the Apostolic Church, the children of Christians were no longer regarded as ἀκάθαρτα, but as ayıa, and that not on the footing of having received the character of holiness by baptism, but as having part in the Christian ἀγιότης by their fellowship with their Christian parents. See on 1 Cor. l.c. Besides, the circumcision of children must have been retained for a considerable time among the Jewish Christians, according to xxi. 21. Therefore (4), the baptism of the children of Christians, of which no trace is found in the New Testament (not even in Eph. vi. 1) is not to be held as an Apostolic ordinance (Or. in ep. ad Rom. lib. v.: 'Ab Apostolis traditione accepit Ecclesia'), as, indeed, it encountered early and long resistance; but it is an institution of the church, which gradually arose in post-Apostolic times in connection with the development of ecclesiastical life and of doctrinal teaching, not certainly attested before Tertullian, and by him still decidedly opposed, and though already defended by Cyprian, only becoming, general after the time of Augustine, in virtue of that connection."

To the like purport, the eminent Dean Stanley, in his Commentary, 1 Cor. vii. 14, "By virtue of the Christianity of her husband." He here appeals to the common feeling of the Christian society, which regarded the children of Christian or mixed marriages, as belonging to God's people, in order to show that in like manner the unbelieving partner must, from marriage to a Christian, also be classed amongst God's

people.

"The passage, on the one hand, is against the practice of infant baptism in the Apostles' time. For (1) he would hardly have founded an argument on the derivation of the children's holiness from their Christian parent or parents, if there had been a distinct act by which the children had themselves been admitted formally into the Christian Society; and (2) he would not have spoken of the heathen partner as being 'holy,' in the same sense as the children were regarded as 'holy' -viz., by connection with a Christian household, if there had been so obvious a difference between the condition of the two, as that one was, and the other was not, baptised; (3) his argument thus understood exactly agrees with the Rabbinical rule about the baptism of proselytes, 'If the female proselyte is with child, there is no need to baptise the child on its birth, for the mother's baptism becomes a baptism for it.'

"On the other hand, the passage asserts the principle on which infant baptism is founded—(1) that family ties with a Christian do themselves consecrate those who are bound by them; and (2) that the children of Christian parents may therefore be considered as amongst the people of God, and that from this would follow the natural consequence that the whole family would participate in the same rites as belonged properly, and in the highest sense only, to those members or that member of it who was strictly a believer."

(iii.) Eph. vi. 1-4. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

We may put the argument from the passage in the clear words of Dr. Wardlaw, "Infant Baptism," p. 132: "This supposition of children being baptised (along with their parents) is in coincidence with the fact of children being addressed in the Apostolic Epistles to the Churches of Christ. Thus in Eph. vi. 1: 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.' Col. iii. 20, 'Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.'

"That such preceptive intimations of the Lord's will are not to be understood as addressed merely to those adult members of families, who were at the same time members of Churches, but as including children from their capability of instruction and admonition, will be admitted by every candid mind that considers their connection with the injunctions to parents, which immediately follow, 'And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'

"Do our Baptist brethren wait till their children are members of Churches before they venture to put their finger on the passages we have quoted, and say, 'This is addressed to you?' If they do not, they act inconsistently with their principle, for if the words were not originally addressed to the young children of the parents in the Churches, neither are they now; and yet if they do, they discharge their parental trust, as it appears to me, in a very defective and unscriptural manner. Of many of them whom I know and esteem and love, I am persuaded better things. Yet every Baptist who, in the Christian tuition of his family, opens his Bible, and points out to his little ministering charge the words, 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for it is right,' and tenderly inculcates the duty by the motives that are involved in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord, tacitly admits, by his practice, that young children were addressed by the Apostles, and that not merely as members of families, but, since the Epistles directed to churches, as in some way connected, by virtue of their relation to their parents, with the Christian communities to which the Apostles wrote. And this is in perfect harmony with the baptism of families, and with all the preceding particulars; and in harmony, too, with all the directions given as to the treatment of children in the Old Testament Scriptures, where their covenant relation to their parents, and their connection with the community of the people of God, are not questioned."

We may reply, that all this proceeds on the supposition that children, unless baptised, can have no connection with the Churches of which their parents are members, and that it would have been out of place for any inspired or apostolic writer to have noticed or counselled young children in a letter addressed to their

parents. If this is to be admitted, then all rightly so addressed must be regarded as members of the Church. But Dr. Wardlaw would not so regard them, or treat them as having all the rights and privileges of members. But it seems utterly out of the question to maintain that, baptised or unbaptised, they could not consistently be addressed as in the passage before us. The parents could not be really or fully taught their duty without some corresponding instruction being given to the children. At the early age now alluded to, the children, if not baptised members of the Church of the parents, are committed to the care and training of the parents, and that by God Himself. As we have already brought out, the apostolic commission cannot be duly carried out, and that in the nearest and most important circle, if not by parents in relation to their own children. As we have more than once said, it is the great, we may say the greatest, work of parents to 'disciple,' to seek the salvation of their children, and thus to lead them to-what Pædobaptists would lead to prematurely, or before the appointed and only appropriate timetheir baptism and membership. Pædobaptism, at least in the case of evangelical Christian parents, will find it more than difficult to define the relation of baptised children to the Christian Church. They seem neither within nor without. Perhaps the fittest mode of expression concerning all children as born into this world of parents Christian or not, is that all possess a Divine birthright to all the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, with a claim on all Christian parents and others for all the instructions and all the influences needful to discipleship, baptism, and membership of a Christian Church. This latter right cannot be

adequately supplied by means of anything short of what is fully implied in the few brief but pregnant words of the Apostle, quoted by Dr. Wardlaw, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right:" "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord."

V. 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Eph. iv. 4-6.—These portions of Scripture, as relating to the same subject, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, may now be treated together, and the more briefly, as so far considered already.

1st. In the former, the Spirit seems to be viewed as having effected His initial work of regeneration, or of inspiring faith in the life-giving Saviour, and as now carrying on His subsequent and permanent work of uniting all Christians as one body to Christ, their living and glorious Head—both Head and Body, as one organic whole, being called by one name, even Christ. This initial work Paul suggests in the second verse of this chapter, by saying that "no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit." In Acts xix. 2-6, the same Apostle appears clearly to indicate this, as also the due order of the baptism of water or of Christian faith, and that of the promised Spirit after faith. Finding certain disciples at Ephesus, Paul asked them, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" and, therefore, after they had been led by the Spirit to believe. They virtually say, No; and then he asks, "Unto what, then, were ye baptised?" implying that he regarded the gift, or baptism, of the Spirit as, in due order, following faith and baptism. When they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, now saying that Jesus is Lord, Paul "laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied "-were, in fact, baptised with "the Spirit of Promise."

This whole chapter deals with the numerous and varied gifts bestowed on those said to be "baptised by one Spirit into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles." The baptism of Pentecost forms the key to that here spoken of; and as Paul above is found simply to ask whether the Ephesian disciples received the Holy Ghost, not using the word baptism, we may regard that baptism as including all His promised works in sealing after faith, and carrying on what all believers need in fitting them for Heaven, and in furnishing for every good work on earth. If we would still further understand the nature and results of this most needful and precious spiritual baptism, we must most carefully study the whole of this chapter, as well as one or two other parallel portions of these Epistles. At least we cannot but regard this work as most wonderful and glorious, the building up of the family of God by uniting countless fallen human beings to Christ as the Son of the Highest, and so restoring them to the Universe as the nearest and dearest portion of it.

But we are here not only told of this baptism of the Spirit, but also of their being "all made to drink into one Spirit." In this some think they find an allusion to the other Christian ordinance of the Lord's Supper with its cup of covenant blessing making the apparent parallel complete. This, however, seems by no means the case. The key to this clause, we feel assured, is to be found in that fine passage:—"Now on the last day, the great (day) of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said,

out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believed on Him should (R.V., were to) receive: for the Spirit was not yet (given); because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 37-39). We have thus to give a second aspect to the work of Pentecost, and also to the second aspect of the work here alluded to-"And were all made to drink into one Spirit." Virtually the same idea is expressed by Jesus to the woman of Samaria, "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. . . . Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life" (John iv. 10, 13, 14). We leave all this for reflection. Christ living in the heart by faith may be this exhaustless fountain of Divine and heavenly life, or "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," working all in all within, making the believer to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ;" ever increasing in that 'knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, which is eternal life.' All the forms of the Divine, and heavenly, and eternal life, are here intended; so that every true Christian, every man in whose heart Christ dwells by faith, becomes a fountain whence flow streams of living water, enriching all around with all life, beauty, power; and destined, at the last, to make all a heaven of the whole earth.

2nd. In our second passage (Eph. iv. 4-6) we find much like that contained in the first. We may quote

the following: - "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." All this may be regarded as fitly introduced by the excellent counsel, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." This reminds us of the one wonderful Body, with its many members, all animated by the one Spirit, and all acting for countless purposes and in ever-varying harmonies. How glorious a work! Such is the true Church, or real Body of Christ, just in proportion as it is baptised by the Holy Spirit, and kept in the unity of love to Christ Jesus on the one hand, and in the abundance of love to one another, according to the new commandment of Christ, on the other.

Paul now renews his happy illustration, "There is one Body and one Spirit." We have already treated of this. He adds, "Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." Here is what we have regarded as the initial work of the Spirit, "the hope of glory through faith in Jesus Christ." How finely the next three follow one another-" one Lord, one faith, one baptism;" the "one Lord" to whom all sinners look in the exercise of the "one faith," as they are taught to acknowledge by the "one baptism." We take this view of the words, however many would regard this as the one baptism of the Holy Spirit. We would not press our view, as not a little might be said in favour of the other. Only, as we cannot say that any decisive proof can be mentioned, we seem to see the closest connection between the three, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," not only expressly mentioned here, but, we may say,

often in like manner connected, virtually if not verbally, throughout the New Testament. As we have said, we would not press decisively the view just given. Of course the baptism of water, the work of man, cannot be compared with that of the Holy Spirit, that of Christ, or of God alone. Still, it is of vast importance as holding up and holding forth the infinitely precious and glorious truth of which the baptised Church of Christ is the pillar and ground of the Truth; whilst the gift or baptism of the Spirit is worthy of all place along with the one Lord and one faith of that Church, here declared viewed as pointing to the entire work of the Spirit in all the members of the Body, absolutely needful in every one for present sanctification, and future and final salvation, as essential as the work of Jesus, as we have said, to fit for heaven, to which His gives the title.

"One God and Father of all." Here all is in proper place, not as subordinate to what goes before, but in keeping with the fact that men go to God through that faith in Jesus which is first alluded to, and, by so doing, find Him what He is here said to be, "The Father of all," and themselves to be His children, "Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ:" whilst that Divine and glorious Father is described by this great Apostle in a way in which no thought can go beyond and no philosophy has ever gone, "Who (is) above all, and through all, and in you all."

VI. Galatians iii. 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 26-29.—This chapter has been long regarded by many as so representing the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision as to afford ground for the inference of infant baptism—the one rite being held to follow and to take the place of the

other. This influence used to be almost universally deemed Scriptural by Pædobaptists. Like other inferences, it has recently yielded to the force of more careful investigation, we may say, especially since the work of Dr. Halley, to which we have more than once referred. He has ably and correctly demonstrated that the circumcision of children was appointed because of their being of the specially separated race of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that for great Messianic purposes, and not because of their connection with their immediate parents, whether believing or not. The rite marked out the race, and was determined by the birth or blood. The parents might be most wicked, might have been guilty of any crime, and yet it would have been criminal to neglect the circumcision of their children. We may here quote from Webster and Wilkinson, Rom, xi, 17, "The ¿λαία was the Church of God" (not in the present sense of the word), "that portion of mankind who are in federal union with Him. The covenant made with Abraham must be distinguished from that which was made with Moses. The former spiritual and universal; the latter temporal and local. The believing Gentiles are members of the former, while the latter is utterly abolished, . . . Dr. Burton remarks: The Christian covenant is not altogether new only, but an enlargement of the former; Christians, therefore, are grafted upon the stock of Abraham, and grow from him as the root. . . . It must not be overlooked that the Apostle is addressing those who were born in heathenism, and not children of the covenant. Their children would be in a different condition." This last remark is certainly correct. But as to the grafting into the stock of Abraham, we must guard

against the idea of the stock of Abraham as the head of the race, instead of that of Abraham as a believer in God. As Paul says, Abraham is "the father of circumcision," not to those merely circumcised, but "to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith which their father had while he was in uncircumcision." The real covenant, then, as above said, recognises none but believers as his seed or children. As Paul says elsewhere, "They which are the children of the flesh, these (are) not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed," Thus, then, Abraham is to be distinctly regarded as the natural head or root of a race, selected for vastly important Messianic purposes, and, accordingly marked off by an appointed rite, which, as thus pointing to the whole race through Isaac and Jacob, was applied to all male children as representative of that race when they were born, because they belonged to the circumcised simply and solely by birth. They had, of course, advantages peculiar to themselves, the very highest being, according to the Apostle, that "to them were committed the oracles of God," just as the children of Christians can have no higher advantages than those derivable from the possession of the complete volume of inspiration. Again, Abraham is to be distinguishably regarded as the father of a totally different class of children, that of those who, like him, believe in God, and whose faith is, like his, "counted to them for righteousness," and whose spirit and character are essentially the same as the saved of God of all lands and ages, and now the same as those of all true Christians everywhere and to the end of time. In this way Abraham is doubly represented—First, As a father of one race or nation, according to nature, or after the flesh; and, second, As a father, not of any one race or nation at all, but of the faithful of all races or nations of the world. Let it be observed that circumcision was attached to the former or natural race alone, and that appropriately at birth, as they were added to it; whilst, before the time of Christ, no token of spiritual likeness to Abraham was at all appointed. As we have seen, before Abraham believed, there had been from the beginning, multitudes of like truly justifying faith; and yet they were marked off by no covenant token or sign whatever. The sign or token attached to the children of the flesh has been. like the covenant of Moses, though not a token of it, as really abolished for ever. The race represented by it has entirely ceased to occupy its peculiar place. Nor has any other people or nation taken its place. Now "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female," yet Abraham remains the head, the root, the father of many nations, or of many children within many nations still, we mean of course by faith, and faith alone. He, their father, looked forward to Christ by faith; they look back to Christ by essentially the same faith; and all, of either time, are alike regarded and called, sons or children of God. If, now, the children of Abraham of either class are to be marked off as the children of God, they must be, and be alone, His by faith, and in no sense the children, or any children, after the flesh-in no sense can such children be numbered or marked out by any token as Abraham's children according to the Spirit, after the likeness of faith, or as the twice-born or regenerate children of God.

All this is clearly and assuredly set forth in this chapter thus, vers. 6, 7, 9, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. . . . So then, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Vers. 13, 14, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," the very promise of the Spirit of which we have been treating so often and so fully as the promised baptism of the Spirit of all Christians.

Vers. 26-29.—"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if (ye be) Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Here we are taught the following:—

Ist. The children of God in fact, and the children of Abraham by likeness, are all such by faith in Jesus Christ. "If ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Of course Abraham was a child of God by faith, and as every one is by faith also, unless by being an exemplar or model child, in no sense is he called a father. Not as following the children of the flesh, but as following the children by faith, are Christians the children of Abraham; and therefore the latter alone are to be baptised, and in no way their children according to the flesh. As expressly here said, and as we might again and again

repeat, before anyone can now be duly baptised as a child of Abraham he must become Christ's, and so one of Abraham's seed and an heir according to promise. Baptism may be said to have followed circumcision in point of time, as the Christian Church or people followed the Abrahamic race, which were not treated as a spiritual but as a carnal people, not as actually converted or really saved, but as, whilst separated for Messianic purposes, at the same time favoured of God with special advantages in order to their conversion and salvation, especially, as we have said, those due to the possession of the saving oracles of God. In this sense, the race was as a race the people of God, or holy to God, or God was a God to them. This is clearly set forth in Exod. xix. 4, 5, 6, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and (how) I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." In the full sense here intended, they would be His people, provided only they became the real children or seed of Abraham by faith and obedience, or by likeness. Now all recognised as the people of God are no longer, as here conditionally, but actually so, and are called what is here promised to be or to become "a peculiar treasure unto Me, a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," as expressly declared, Jer. xxxi. 31-34, already quoted, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant," &c. At the utmost, then, circumcision marked out the most highly favoured people belonging to God, who claimed "all the earth as His," whilst baptism points to a people born again of the Spirit of God, and through faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism recognises a second birth, and, to all the world of every age, declares the Church of Christ to be the Church of the Twiceborn.

2nd. As yet we have passed over the question of the baptism here referred to: "For as many of you as have been (R.V., were) baptised into Christ, have (R.V., did) put on Christ." The force of this is very differently viewed. Some have supposed the baptism of the Holy Spirit as spiritually uniting to Christ, we would certainly maintain that nothing less can be implied to take place, but as in the case of Rom. vi. 1-4, we think the baptism of faith in Jesus, and of Christian profession, is really The connection of the clauses seems to show this—(First), "Ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus." As we have already found, this implies, nay, demonstrates the initial work of the Holy Spirit in the case of every believer, and cannot in any way set that work aside, as we find most expressly illustrated in John i. 11-13, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power (R.V., the right) to become the sons of God, (even) to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," of course, of the Spirit of God. (Secondly), "For as many of you as have been, or were, baptised into Christ, have, or did, put on Christ." That is to say, they were baptised into Christ when they believed in Christ; but in thus being baptised into Him, they put Him on, they clothed themselves in Him, they came to be as if they had become Himself, the son of God, and thus sons of God in Him, sharing

in or actually possessing His sonship, and therefore the sons of God. This may be clearly seen in the case of the baptism of Rom. vi. 1-4, in which the baptised is buried with Christ, disappears as if from all life and place with Him, rises from the dead in Him, as if one with Him alone, and walks in newness of life with Him. Here the figure is different, but appropriate as in the case just referred to. In baptism he puts on Christ, rises clothed in Christ, made one with or in Christ, nay, as if Christ, and consequently, as said, "a son of God by faith in Jesus Christ." (Thirdly), "There is (R.V., can be) neither Jew nor Greek, . . . for ye are all one (R.V., one man) in Christ Jesus." What is true of any one believer is true of every believer, or of all believers, all are one and the same in Jesus; there is no room for difference or classes in Him or among one another. (Fourthly), "And if ye are Christ's," who is Abraham's seed, His great promised seed, "then are ye Abraham's seed;" and like all his children by faith, "heirs according to promise," especially the promised spirit, but not alone, even the promised kingdom of God and of heaven.

We may here add somewhat as to the force of ver. 27 with respect to baptism. We must take special care lest we confound the nature and effect of faith as the medium of the new birth through saving union with Jesus Christ, and the nature and effect of baptism which follows it; the former real, and simply symbolised by the latter. Confusion here has resulted in, we might say, infinite evil. Many become confused by the thought that men are supposed to become children of God twice—first, by faith, again, at baptism. Our commentators are in some cases at fault in not clearly

showing how all is simple and consistent. If an illustration, which we have already used for a kindred purpose, had been duly kept in view, all such confusion might have been avoided. We refer to that of the actual inheritance of a crown and kingdom, and the future coronation of the king, as to which we consider that we speak with the fittest language when we say that he became king, either when he did so according to constitutional law, or when, by mere arrangement, he was, it might be long after, duly and grandly crowned. He really became king in the former case. He formally, or, we may say, symbolically, became king in the latter case; yet no one would be at a loss to see that he could not be properly said to have been made king twice, or at two different times. So that moment the Holy Spirit leads anyone to believe, he is also led to love Christ, to love God, to be in Christ; he is born again of the incorruptible word, he is a new creature or child of God. Not, it may be, at once, not even for a considerable time, say under the very work of Pentecostal preaching, is he duly baptised; and so it may be said, both that he became a child of God by faith at the one time, and that he put on Christ in or by baptism at the other; and so he might be said to have been made in two different senses, and at two different times, a Christian, just as we have said of a man made twice a king. The believer puts on Christ by faith in reality; and then he again puts Him on in symbol or by baptism. Nor is the second any mere form, he in heart and soul puts Him on in a special and precious exercise of faith at the time, and in the act of Christian baptism. In Rom. xiii. 14 we are told of a putting on of Christ, and that after baptism, nay, we might say, not once or twice, but

many times, for purposes of sanctification or of obedience, as here for, we might add, purposes of forgiveness and confession of our Lord and our faith in Him.

Once more here we may add—

- (1.) We would note the special function of Christian faith, namely, that of constituting all believers sons of God.
- (2.) Unless for the purpose of illustrating this in a way fitted to meet the case of Jew and Gentile as now made one in Christ, this might have been enough, and the reference to baptism might not have been required. But Paul saw the fitness of it for such illustration, and so introduces it for perpetual important use, as showing oneness of every believer with Christ, and oneness of all, Jewish and Gentile believers alike, with one another in Christ, or in the one great promised seed of Abraham.
- (3.) As an illustration, by which the minds of all Christians, Jews and Gentiles, could be addressed and impressively appealed to, Paul could not have done better than to have selected the ordinance of baptism, with which all were perfectly familiar, and which experience would make them fully appreciate. The baptism of the Spirit, being a purely spiritual and internal experience, and of which very many might have little consciousness, could not have the same effect.
- (4.) Especially would this be so, because of the two ideas of putting on Christ, and thus being all in Christ, and all therefore one in Him, and that with no such class differences as of those mentioned, Jews, Gentiles, &c. This point would certainly far less clearly appear, if it could well appear at all, than on the supposition of water baptism, in which all classes would be known and

seen to be baptised on the ground of a common faith in Christ, all appearing as one undivided class or people, in fact, a new kingdom separated from all other kingdoms, more than had ever been even the nations of Israel from all the other nations of the world.

(5.) Again, there could be no reference here made to infants, or to any but those actually possessing a professing faith in Jesus Christ. The "for" of ver. 27, is clearly connected with the being "children of God by faith" of ver. 26. The baptism accordingly was the baptism of believers—the baptism illustrating the point in view of showing how a common faith in Christ, and consequent baptism into Christ, showed oneness in point of sonship of God in Christ. But this is not all. It is not said that the baptised into Christ are clothed with Christ, or have Christ put on them, as it must have been in the case of infants, who could do nothing of themselves. But our best critics combine even to emphasise the fact, that the verb makes the baptised put on Christ themselves, as an act of their own, proving both that the baptism could neither be that of helpless infants in water, nor, as some hold in the case of adults, that of the Spirit, which alone would have done the whole work of putting on Christ, whilst the baptised could not have been said at all to have so done. Let it be fully noted that the baptised are thus said to do what could be done by themselves alone, and that only by faith in Christ. We think, then, that only what goes by the name of believers' baptism, can be regarded as intended by the Apostle here.

(6.) This is still further confirmed by the usage of the verb elsewhere by the same Apostle. Thus, Rom. xiii. 14, the Roman Christians, doubtless after baptism, and

therefore after putting on Christ in baptism, are counselled: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to (fulfil) the lusts (thereof);" clearly implying that they might be called upon and expected to do so again and again, and that doubtless by faith, and in the course of their progressive work of Christian sanctification. This putting on Christ, thus, was an act thoroughly their own, by faith, and through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Whatever, then, the nature of the baptism of the Spirit in the case of adults, or the secret workings of the Spirit in infant days, let us fully maintain, that here neither could be intended in this place, in fact, that the baptism of faith and of Christians can alone be referred to here.

Let us, then, take this and one or two other instances of the use of the expression, "the putting on of Jesus Christ." The figure is that of a dress, the uniform of a soldier, the garb of a man; if that of another, a representation of that other, here of Jesus Christ. So Paul himself represented Christ, and became as one with Christ, or as another Christ, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." In fact, the best, if not the only way to put on Christ, is simply to put on, or take in Christ, and that by a real or living faith, to let Him dwell in our hearts by faith, and in order to this, to let Him enter and dwell there by a present and continued faith. Then, as we live and act according as we thus love Him, we shall live through Him as He lives in Himself-we shall be like Him, we shall grow more and more like Him. We shall live and appear as if we were all one with Him, as if we were so many Christs. So here in baptism we are said to put on Christ, to take, as if for the first time, or at the beginning of our

Christian career, Christ into our hearts, or to look upon ourselves as taking and expressing that oneness with Him, which we experienced when we first truly believed. The precious act is entirely our own, and may be repeated frequently through life, and must be so if we would progressively become more and more like Him, and become finally perfectly like Him, one with Him, and so become faultless before God. We have not the same, but a similar use of the verb in the same chapter, Rom. xiii. 12, "Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light;" we must do so ourselves, and that by getting the light to enter, and to influence all within, and so to be a defence against all the powers of darkness. We may add another example: "And that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which after God is (R.V., hath been) created in righteousness, and true holiness (R.V., holiness of truth)" (Eph. iv. 23, 24). The true man will appear without, in all action and conduct, just as the spirit of the mind within is renewed. We put on, through internal power or influence, whether we put, or receive, or cherish, within. In like manner, we find Christ Himself, in His exquisitely beautiful and exhaustlessly instructive illustration of the unity of His people with Himself, in the parable of the True Vine and its branches, sets forth this idea of 'being and abiding in Him,' and 'He in them,' as of like form and meaning.

We see, then, no proof or trace here of either infant baptism or the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but simply and solely of Christian baptism, or that of faith in Christ, or what has come to be called by very many believers baptism. We may thus conclude that there are three ways in which we are said to put on Christ; (First), by faith, when men believe or are united to Christ by faith, and become new creatures in Him, and, as here said, "sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ;" (secondly), by baptism, or by the appointed manner of profession, in which they are commanded by Christ Himself in the great apostolic commission; and (thirdly), by obedience or by practice, or often, in the whole work of sanctification, or of the Divine, and spiritual, and heavenly life.

VII. Eph. v. 25-27.—"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it (R. V., 'up for it'); that He might sanctify and cleanse (it) with the washing of water, by the word (R. V., 'having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word'), that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church (R. V., 'that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious (Church)'), not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish."

We shall say with respect to this beautiful passage, as it cannot, so it does not, really allude to baptism, but to the Church, made up of believers already baptised, and not yet perfected for her eternal home as "the bride, the Lamb's wife," but being so prepared by the precious work of sanctification, as is here finely said, by Himself and for Himself, "with the washing of water by the word." Webster and Wilkinson, ver. 26, "With water as the symbol, by the word as the instrument. The action of the participle precedes that of the verb. There may be some allusion to the lustrations of a bride. $\tau \hat{\varphi} \lambda o \nu \tau \rho \hat{\varphi}$, properly a bath, but frequently used for the water of the bath or ablution, Tit. iii. 5; Heb. x. 22, note. Connect $\hat{\epsilon} \nu \ \hat{\rho} \hat{\eta} \mu a \tau \nu$

with $\kappa a\theta a\rho i\sigma as$. $\epsilon \nu$ intimates its element, the circumstances necessarily attendant upon the action $(\dot{a}\gamma\iota\dot{a}\sigma\eta,\kappa a\theta a\rho i\sigma as)$; in the ministry of the word, regarded as an actual utterance of invitation, promise, instruction."

VIII. Col. ii. 10-12.—This passage might have been treated along with Rom. vi. 1-4 as parallel to it, and to be interpreted on the same principle. Not a little might be said in favour of a reference to spiritual baptism. The express reference, however, seems to be to the external rite, only we must entirely avoid the too frequent confusion of the symbol with the symbolised, the shadow with the substance, the picture with the pictured.

Here, as in other places, the Apostle had to combat errors of various kinds, Jewish and Gentile, such as that of the continued necessity and practice of circumcision, as if Christians could not be perfect or complete without it.

1st. Ver. 9, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He was able to do all for them which they could really need, and be all to them which could make them perfect, not in the final completeness of their being, as men, but in the entireness of all the elements of their perfect manhood. They would, as united to Him, possess full forgiveness, eternal salvation, oneness with God Himself, the wisdom which is from above, and the final blessedness and glory of the saints in light.

2nd. "Ye are complete (R.V., made full) in Him Who is the Head of all principality and power." This brings out the more clearly the 'fulness' or 'completeness' of these and of all saints through their faith in Christ or union with Him. He has "all power in

heaven and on earth," and therefore can and does rule over all for the good of His own people.

3rd. "In whom ye are (or were) also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands," a totally different and infinitely more precious and important work than the literal, but only symbolic one. Jewish Christians greatly clung to all the rites and ordinances of Old Testament times, and often contended for the sacredness and perpetuity of circumcision as enjoined on all the nation, even on their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Still, it was no more than a sign which could do no more than point to something far better than itself, and which Christ effected, as no man could, for all who truly received Himself or believed in His name.

4th. "In the putting off of the body of the flesh, by (or in) the circumcision of Christ." Some refer this to the literal circumcision of Christ, to which they were conformed by their union with Him. This is far from the truth. The reference is undoubtedly to the circumcision just spoken of, as "not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh." Reunion with Him makes a man "a new creature: old things pass away, behold, all things become new." The love of Christ which springs from faith in Christ, so changes the entire nature as to supply all the grace and spiritual power needed to turn from old sins, and to alter the whole current of the desires and affections, in fact, to affect the seat of the sinful nature, and the future life of the man. He is "circumcised with the circumcision of Christ."

5th. "Buried with Him in baptism" (R.V., "having been buried with Him in baptism"). Here the same

is said of all Christians as in Rom. vi. 1-4. Webster and Wilkinson: "In your baptism you were assured of your fellowship in his death, burial, and resurrection. In baptism that was symbolised, and by faith was realised, which had already been effected for you in Christ."

6th. "Wherein also ye are risen with (Him)." We are viewed as raised symbolically, in baptism, as truly from the dead in Christ as we are truly buried in or with Him. The perfect complex symbol represents our death and burial in the death and burial of Jesus Christ on the one hand, and our resurrection and new life in the resurrection and new life of Jesus on the other; all being followed by a resurrection life, in which God is served and sin denied, till we actually rise like Jesus, actually live like Him, and actually dwell in heaven with Him, and with His Father and our Father, His God and our God, for ever and ever.

7th. "Through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead." Some suppose faith caused by the same power of God as that by which He raised Christ from the dead, and in causing that faith, causing the newness of life due to the resurrection of Christ. This would at first sight occur as the genitive follows 'faith.' But, if correct, then we would have two distinct kinds of effects, a physical and a spiritual, traced to one kind of cause, namely, a physical, that mighty power which raised Christ from the dead, and the same physical power, as raising to new spiritual life. This is altogether incongruous. We must, then, with all good criticism, take the faith to rest on the almighty power of God, which raised Christ from the dead, and so gave a Divine and all-sufficient guarantee of both will and

power to raise all Christians from the dead, and to crown them with all the blessedness and glory of Jesus, in which they are destined to share with and in Him. Accepting this meaning of the clause, we find one or two cases of like references to the resurrection of Christ by the power of God. Thus Rom. iv. 23-25, "Now it was not written for His sake alone, that it was reckoned unto Him; but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences (R.V., trespasses), and was raised again for our justification." Again, Rom. x. 6-10, "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? That is, to bring Christ down (from above). Or, Who shall descend into the abyss? This is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is night hee, (even) in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith, which we preach, that, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart. that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." In this way the faith here spoken of is pointed out by the Apostle as occupying a most important place in the scheme of our salvation; faith, whether in the power of God, who raised Christ from the dead, or on Him who raised Jesus from the dead.

8th. Let us, then, consider what was, in these apostolic times, the real experience of every believer, who was baptised as here referred to. Again and again we find, that only those who had been discipled, made disciples or led to believe, were encouraged to be

baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. Now, what were they called upon to believe? Our Apostle will tell us: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and thou shalt be saved." Now what would this imply? Certainly, to say the least, even to use the very word of still the same Apostle: "I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures: and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4); and thus He describes the Gospel "which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain;" which, he goes on to explain, would be the case, if Christ had not risen from the dead, or if God had not exercised that mighty power in the resurrection of Christ, on which the faith of our passage is said to rest, and by which they are said to be themselves raised from the dead in the baptism, in which they had been buried with Jesus Christ, not one word is here added as to baptism as forming a part of the Gospel. Paul even distinguishes clearly and strongly between the Gospel and the administration of the rite of baptism which followed the belief of the Gospel: "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel" (1 Cor. i. 17) Paul acting somewhat as his Master, who made and baptised many disciples, and yet baptised not, but His disciples. In this way, when Paul preached about the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and men believed and retained his words, he declared them saved through faith in the Gospel, faith in the reception of Christ as dead, buried, and risen from the dead. With this saving faith, multitudes would be baptised. Now, when they were actually baptised, what would be the consciousness as to Christ and their faith in Him? Would it not be, that they were already one by faith in Him. one with Him in His death for their sins, one with Him in His burial, and one with Him in His resurrection: not that they had at all yet to become one with Him as to all these, else they would not yet be saved as we have found them affirming that they would be; but that they committed themselves in faith in Christ, and submission to Him, as now being of the saved by Him, to the person baptising to be treated as already one with Christ in all these respects, and so to be baptised as an expression of their accomplished union with Christ by faith, and as a symbolical representation of that union, first addressed to their own personal experience, and, next, addressed to all witnessing it or coming to know of it, as a profession of faith in their Saviour and Lord, the faith, which they had before baptism, and which they must have been supposed to have as a condition of that baptism. This would imply the following:-

- (1.) That the baptism here spoken of as that of all Christians, implying not only the capability of exercising, but the actual exercise of faith in God, or in the power of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, could not have been infant baptism, or by possibility in any way adapted to the case of infants.
- (2.) As the faith which constitutes a man a Christian is the work of the Holy Spirit, and as a man must be a Christian and therefore united to Christ by that faith, this baptism cannot be regarded as what has been treated by some as the baptism of the Holy Spirit apart from all water baptism; or a baptism of water, by or

in which the Holy Spirit regenerates, or is supposed to regenerate, the infant incapable of faith, or the adult whether with or without faith;—implying that here we have no evidence, but rather the reverse of evidence of the truth of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

- (3.) As in Rom. vi. 1-4, we seem here to find a strong proof of the apostolic practice of immersion, as we have acknowledged by our most learned and judicious critics and commentators on the New Testament writings.
- (4.) Let us gladly accept the conclusion to which we seem surely and finally led by the careful study of this precious and inspiring portion of Scripture, that all were regenerated or actual Christians, or supposed to be such, before they could be deemed fit subjects of this initial sacred rite; and greatly rejoice in the glorious fact, that all Scripture places faith and regeneration before baptism, and not in or through baptism, and that, therefore, we should never cease to teach or preach and openly to profess this doctrine of regeneration before baptism, and therefore by no possibility in, by, or through baptism; therefore the baptism of the regenerate excluded all baptismal regeneration.

IX. Titus iii. 4-7. — To these words the most assured appeals have been often made, as pointing to the baptism of water as the appointed medium of the Holy Spirit's work in the regeneration of mankind. We feel fully assured that no direct or literal reference to baptism can be found here. There is certainly a decided resemblance to them, and those of the great teacher addressed to Nicodemus, which, we are assured, do not refer to baptism at all, but to the infinitely more important question of that of which baptism can be regarded as, at the utmost, no more than an

appointed symbol, most wonderfully fitted to be an expression and impression representative of the truth, at once "as it is in Jesus," and as it is condensed in the grand baptismal formula, "The name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," in which every believer is to be viewed as, in his baptism, making his good and noble confession, and at the same time as bearing witness to the Church of Christ as that of "the twice-born, whose being and blessedness are to be for ever traced to the richest glory of the grace of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is not so much as one direct reference to baptism, though it may be admitted that some indirect allusion to that rite may have been intended, or to the external form of it. As we hold that the words of Jesus, addressed to Nicodemus, can be demonstrated to set forth the great and mysterious doctrine of the new birth alone, and not at all to the question of Christian baptism; so we hold that the same is true of the passage before us. If to be called a baptism of any import, however correct and Scriptural, it must be described as a baptism of Christ, "not made with hands," but "by the Spirit of the living God." Any baptism of water is both out of place and out of time, which goes before the "regeneration" here declared to form an essential part of the salvation ascribed to the abounding mercy of the blessed God.

In this great utterance of the Apostle we have a second reference, in this short epistle, to the grandest manifestation of the grace and mercy of God towards mankind. First, In chap. ii. 11–14, the work of the Father by His Son is specially set forth, as here the same work is specially set forth as that of the Holy Spirit. The two passages are, therefore, the more

striking and complete. We may quote both. Chap. ii. 11-14: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (or, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared), teaching us that, denying, &c. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour (or, more correctly, R.V., 'of our great God and Saviour) Jesus Christ' who gave Himself for us," &c. Between this direct and Divine work, as thus set forth, God rather than man appears. However much may be implied, human works and agencies are at least kept in the background, whilst the grace of God the more brightly shines forth in glory. Here, as we have said, we have a second reference to the Divine manifestation, in which the Father is said, in His abounding mercy, to save, but now by His Spirit; He having the more prominent place in the work of salvation, Chap. iii. 4-6: "After that (or, when) the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love towards man, appeared, not by works (done) in righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." As in the other cases, all is Divine, only now the Spirit's work is more prominently set forth. No works of men, no human agency, no preaching or baptising, are allowed yet to interfere with the outgoings of the mercy of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Let us not, then, catch at a word, that we may introduce an emblem, however precious, to no small extent to supplant the grand reality. Especially

should we guard against this, as, in both cases, God is represented as doing His own work at His own time. and in His own way-the gracious Spirit not waiting for and upon the outward material symbol through which to accomplish His inward spiritual work, of which it is afterwards to be the fitly appointed symbol, or sign-not seal, but token. How sad to find the most learned and highly esteemed commentators coming down in their mistaken exegesis, as if from heaven to earth, and treating the words of apostolic inspiration, as, with infallible certainty, to look to the priestly regulated order or time of a water baptism for the greatest work of the free and Sovereign One, of whom Christ Himself, in a very solemn time, declared, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." We cannot but be sad indeed at the thought of many learned and useful expounders of New Testament Scripture, lending their authority to the support of a doctrine which has misled millions for ages, and still remains a danger as well as a disgrace to many peoples. In his treatment of this very passage, we are specially very sad to think of such high authority as that of the excellent Alford, giving forth no uncertain or unwilling sound in support of the fearful doctrine to which we allude. Though we, doubtless, find words which so far tend to modify his more strong, and, we may say, most offensive, declaration, we cannot but more than regret this fearful and most deceptive and deadly sentence: "Baptismal regeneration is the distinguishing doctrine of the New Covenant (Matt. iii. 11)." We could hardly imagine any man, however

ignorant of Scripture, to give utterance to any error more opposed to the whole spirit and scope of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, than this thus expressed as from the very heart and mind of this most scholarly and estimable Christian; and yet we further find him using the express words of the forerunner of the perfect and uncrring Master, with respect to Him, as the foundation of his belief-words which, if he had not thoroughly overlooked or mistaken, he could not but have seen to have no reference to water baptism, far less to baptismal regeneration at all. What are they? "I indeed baptise you with (or, in) water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." John is here addressing his disciples, or at least those also whom he is calling to his discipleship, to repentance, and so to his baptism; and to such he says, what is virtually a promise of a higher baptism, which he declares beyond his power, and within the power of Jesus only. He could and did baptise with water. Man could, many did that. The prospective baptism was beyond all human, all created power. Only God could, and, in due time, did, and still does, baptise with the Spirit of God. Strange that as well learned as ignorant men should not perceive that men can and do baptise with water now as John did then; and that all the priests in the world are as powerless to baptise with the Spirit as was John. But here we would specially call attention to the fact, that John and Christ's disciples were as really to be regarded as converted to God, and, therefore, as regenerated by the Spirit of God, and baptised accordingly by

John and Christ's disciples as any believers in Christ, regenerated by the spirit now, and in like manner duly baptised. Here, then, before and after the resurrection of Christ, we have men as truly regenerated and baptised as they can be said to be yet, and still the promise is given to them of their being baptised with the Spirit. We must distinguish, then, between this promised work and the Spirit's previous work in conversion or regeneration before and in order to the baptism of profession and of faith in Jesus, and the sonship of God. This is clearly exemplified and seen in the case of the Apostles and other disciples immediately before the Ascension on the one hand, and the Day of Pentecost on the other. Surely the Apostles were converted men, regenerated and made children of God, all the while they were personally with Jesus, and yet Jesus repeats the words of John, and assures them of what Alford identifies with the ordinary baptism, not only of adult believers, but also and even of children incapable of any belief at all, and of what he most strongly and solemnly calls by the terrible and awfully unnatural name of "baptismal regeneration," nay, "the distinguishing doctrine of the new covenant." Now, what did the risen Lord Himself say to the Apostles whom He had chosen—"Speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God," surely inspired as well regenerated men? Just that the words of John as to Jesus would be fulfilled—telling them to "wait for the promise of the Father, which (said He) ye heard of Me: for John indeed baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Then He told them what would be the result of this baptism—"Ye shall receive power when the Holy

Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." He thus expressly tells them what the baptism promised of the Father really is, not that operation by which they had already been made regenerate disciples, and so baptised with water, but that needed to endow them thus regenerated, with power from on high, and so to fit for the great evangelistic work committed to their trust. The same order we find observed by the Apostles on and after the marvellous and miraculous baptism of the Spirit granted by the Father on the Day of Pentecost, and seemingly to the close of apostolic times. The promised baptism of the Spirit, then, was not said at all to be for the conversion or regeneration of sinners, but, according to Christ, for the increased power of saints or really of baptised believers, to use a common name, to bear witness for Jesus, and preaching the Gospel, and thus, through the Holy Spirit, converting to God, making disciples, regenerating souls, and leading them to make a good and open confession of Christ in water baptism, as the appointed sign of discipleship, or of sonship to God through faith in Jesus Christ. When the promised Pentecostal baptism came, and Peter was prepared to preach, and a multitude, thoroughly convinced of sin, was prepared to hear, many believed, and asked what they ought to do; they were told to repent, to believe, and to be baptised, and they would, thus converted or regenerated and baptised, receive the Holy Spirit. The first work of the Spirit in regenerating and thus providing for a temple or house in the renewed heart for Himself, the Apostles laid their hands upon them, as did Peter in

the city of Samaria, "and they received the Holy Ghost." So Paul at Ephesus, Acts xix., meeting disciples yet unbaptised with Christ's baptism, first baptised them in water, "and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied;" not that they were regenerated and saved, which they had been before, though yet unbaptised, and were treated as such by the Apostle. It might be said that Ananias laid his hands on Paul (rather than Saul) before his baptism in water; and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord (even) Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptised." But there was no real exception. In his case, as in that of Cornelius, the gift of the Holy Spirit was bestowed, not for regeneration, but for evidential purposes, and so went before the water baptism of the profession of full and enlightened faith in Christ. But before either the gift of the Spirit or the baptism, nay, before Ananias was sent to Saul, or Peter to Cornelius, both were acknowledged to have been renewed in heart and accepted of God; and, therefore, the ordinary and all-important work of the Spirit in conversion and regeneration had been effected before that water baptism which the excellent Dean Alford stoutly holds to be that "laver of regeneration," with the water of which, unless a man is baptised, he cannot have "the new life unto God conveyed" to him. "And inasmuch as it is in that font, and when we are in it, that the first breath of that life is drawn, it is this laver of,—

belonging to, pertaining to, setting forth,—regeneration. Observe there is here no figure: the words are literal: Baptism is taken as in all its completion,—the outward visible sign accompanied by the inward spiritual grace; and as thus complete, it not only represents, but is, the new birth." How amazing! Yet we need not wonder to find the teachings of childhood at day and Sabbathschools, by revered priests and beloved parents, should become and continue to the end of life as a part of the very constituted nature which no future study, research, or meditation can possibly eradicate, especially when the instruction is so delightful and so comforting, and so accepted as the infallible Word of God, as that of the Catechism of the Church of England—"our instruction-to be learned of every person before he be brought to be confirmed by the bishop."

"Who gave you this name? (A.) My godfather and godmother in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the

kingdom of heaven."

Paul was taught in a different school, and was a teacher, at least as to this, of a totally different style. Accustomed to make the clearest distinction between the work of the Spirit in conversion or regeneration of sinners, and the grace of the same Spirit in His indwelling presence and all-animating power in the heart of every saint of God; or in every one in whose heart Jesus dwells by faith, he could by no possibility have written in this or in any other Epistle a single sentence which any expositor could correctly interpret as the learned Dean has interpreted this. As he went about preaching the Gospel to the people, and confirming the faith of the converts, Paul was familiar

with the baptism, or what we may call this after-gift of the Spirit, as he was often made the honoured medium of conveying it, nay, speaks, in his Epistle to the Romans, whom he had never seen, of his great desire to visit them, as he says, "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift to the end that ye may be established." He was constantly witnessing the copious outpouring of the Spirit of which he here speaks, and could not mistake for His initial regenerating agency His permanent comforting presence and blessing. We cannot but marvel at those who believe in the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, being capable of supposing the Apostles and others actually holding such a doctrine, and yet acting in relation to Christian baptism as they did, and as all, more or less, appear to do. To be the means of the regeneration of an immortal being by baptism, or in any way, must be justly regarded as one of the most highly honoured works in the service of God, even more so than that of preaching the Gospel itself, by which, according to this doctrine, no man is or can be regenerated unto God and yet Paul is found rejoicing that he had baptised so few, on the ground that he had not been sent to baptise, and so be the means of regenerating multitudes, but to preach the Gospel, by which he could not have been the means of regenerating a single soul, or doing that without which Christ assures all mankind that not a single soul can see or enter the kingdom of God. Nor was Paul singular. Even Christ Himself, on this supposition, baptised not, but deemed it becoming to depute to His disciples the most awful and yet glorious office of providing a humbler medium for the Holy Spirit, the only power in the Universe capable of doing

one of the greatest, if not the very greatest of Divine works, that of new creating a sinful fallen spirit, in order that He might put forth His power in the accomplishment of the inconceivably mysterious and miraculous works of God. So again Peter, when he was led to see that the time had come, according to this doctrine of the learned Dean, took not the great honour to himself, but commanded some unknown, but doubtless worthy friend, to do his part in bringing to pass what might crown with glory the brightest angel of heaven. Oh! what folly for the Apostles, Peter and Paul, and most likely all the others, on the supposition of this doctrine, to prefer the preaching of Christ to the work of baptising in water! We shall now go on to consider the words which have chiefly led to the controversy of which we have been treating, namely, verses 5, 6:-"According to His (God's) mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit: which He shed on us abundantly (or, richly) through Jesus Christ our Saviour." We may make these observations:-

First, We should have said, under Eph. v. 26, what we would decidedly say here, that, instead of referring to any work or baptism of man, in both cases the whole is said to have been done by Christ in the one case, and by the Father in this. In Eph. v. 25, 26, it is Christ who is not only said to have 'loved the Church, and given Himself for it'; but that He did so "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word (R.V., that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing, [or bath] of water with the Word"). Christ then is He who sanctifies, not by making it His by conversion or regeneration, but as having made

it His, His bride, His already regenerated, and at least so far sanctified, and now still under His purifying and perfecting grace, that she might be made, and make herself, ready and adorned for her Husband. So that, as some hold, and Alford fully admits, the λουτρώ is here meant for the bath or laver of ablution for marriage, and, therefore, he ought to have kept by that, and not to have referred here at all to the regeneration of a supposed baptism. The work being Christ's, being real and not ritual. We find Christ using almost the same words, "Every (branch) that beareth fruit, He (My Father) cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Already ve are clean, because of the Word which I have spoken unto you" (John xv. 2, 3). The same Greek verb is used in both cases, and the same instrument used, though $\lambda \acute{o} \gamma o \varsigma$ in the one case, and $\acute{o} \hat{\eta} \mu a$ in the other, but the Word of God in both passages. No one would think of Christ alluding to baptism in connecting the process of cleansing with the Word; and why should any one suppose Paul to refer cleansing with water or a bath with the same Word? Christ in both cases is the purifying or cleansing agent, and in the same two cases the Word is the instrument which He uses for the purpose. So much for Eph. v. 25, 26. The same may be said of Titus iii. 5, 6, not by any mere rite, but of His own great mercy, God Himself is here said to save "by the washing, or bath of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." We think washing to be the more fit word to be connected with regeneration; and though Alford maintains that bath or laver, and not by any means washing, is the right translation of the Greek, we find Webster and Wilkinson decidedly affirming that λουτρόν, which properly signifies a bath, is also "used for

the water of the bath, or ablution." Much might be said as to the few cases given in favour of Alford; but we cannot suppose the literal vessel here meant, but the water in it, or practically the water in the bath, or really "washing," just as we use the word cup, not as a vessel but as that which it contains, and which we are said to drink. So that it seems to matter little which translation we adopt. Certainly, it does not seem right to speak of being cleansed with a bath or laver, or by a laver; and if we say with or by, then the vessel must be used of the water in it, and then "washing" will be more correct and suitable than the other. We shall come to this point more fitly when we treat of the two parallel clauses together, or in their connection.

Let us keep in view what we have just said, that God the Father Himself is the real and only Agent. He, not any man or men, is as truly said to act by the washing or bath of regeneration as by the renewing of the Holy Spirit; so that it is simply beyond all reason to affirm that the former was effected by the hand of man, and the latter by the agency of God. Keeping up the fact that God is said to do this wonderful work, let us see how a like work of God is described in Ps. li. 2, 7, 10, 11:—" Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Here God does all by His Spirit alone, and literally uses no material element; and yet the prayer seems to imply the use of such as certainly as is affirmed to be the case in this passage, and in Eph. v. 26. This should finally put an end to all difference of opinion and all controversy here, as also in the like instance of John iii, 1-5.

We have, however, more to add as to the structure of the parallel clauses, which our commentators appear to have totally overlooked. For some time that structure suggested a more decisive answer to those upholding any reference to water baptism. We know of no allusion to what we mean except a brief one by Pool. Alford properly reasons as a proper foundation for argument as to the "balance of the sentence." We were glad to find so near an approach to our idea; but yet with no real aid to a true exposition. We hold that, according to the grammatical structure, or Hebrew parallelism employed, the first expression, "the washing or the bath of regeneration," must be explained in harmony with the meaning of the second, "and renewing of the Holy Spirit." Now, this certainly means the renewing of which the Holy Spirit is the author or source. In keeping with this what must be the corresponding meaning of the other? Not the regeneration which is the cause or the origin of the washing or cleansing, or removal of the impure or corrupt nature of man, but the bath, the washing, the cleansing, which is the cause, the medium, the source of the regeneration. Let the whole appear in its true parallel form, simply reversing the order. Then we have, by the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and by the washing, the cleansing, the removal of the impurity or corruption, as caused by or resulting from regeneration. Reverse the order, with this in view, and we have the true idea, and virtually that of Pool, "By the washing of regeneration; washing us by regeneration, as in a laver, the pledge and sign of which is baptism." This is admirably put, and though we do not agree as to baptism being a seal, which is the Spirit Himself, but only a sign or symbol, which water baptism is, and which naturally and Scripturally comes after regeneration, and therefore can, by no possibility, have any share in the cause or origin of it.

We might here show that scientifically as well as Scripturally, nay, grammatically, our interpretation is correct, that is to say, it is by means of regeneration or a renovation of nature, a use of a kind of vis medicatrix naturæ by the Spirit of all grace, that the corruptions of human nature, the moral and spiritual diseases of the heart are cleansed or washed out and washed away, and the man made gradually and perfectly whole. In Job xxxiii. 14–33, we have a beautiful and instructive portion of ancient Scripture, which we may delight to read and to ponder.

X. Heb. x. 19-22.—We would refer briefly, because certain commentators and many others still regard this passage as having a reference to the waters of baptism. We are astonished that anyone should continue to do so. Here the writer is addressing, not those unbaptised, and being about to be baptised, but all Christians, even the most advanced, in fact to the baptised alone, and not at any one period of their career, but at every stage, from beginning to end, nay, every day of their lives, especially when they approach the Throne of the heavenly Grace with the consciousness of the remembrances of any sin or short-coming. This all ought to see at a glance, and thus feel perfectly assured that the waters of baptism have been fully used and that once for all, and only and often, as here, the pure and purifying water, symbolical of the purification or continued baptism of the Holy Spirit, is here intended. We say the water of baptism representing the new birth can, with no propriety, be used more than once, as representing what can take place only once, unless there are held to be, not one new or second birth, but, as no one can surely suppose that baptism was appointed to symbolise more than one birth, even many births, as I know not how to describe the indescribable ideas of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, and others. Only one baptism, representing one spiritual birth, and then many a sacred feast or supper of our Lord to signify our frequent or constant feeding by faith on the Son of Man, or that the babe in Christ may go on to grow till he rise to manhood in Christ, and live on Him till perfect in Him and finally prepared for heaven and glory.

"Let us draw near with a true heart." Full of all confidence, not in ourselves, or in any mere creature, or in anyone save our great High Priest, let us enter by the living and consecrated way into the Holiest, even to the Throne of Grace, "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," even with the blood of Christ, applied by the Spirit through faith; as in ancient times the cleanser the cleansing water, the water of separation, the water mixed with the ashes of the red heifer of annual sin-offering, and which was often used in the daily life of all Israelites. This was certainly literal, as we here find it alluded to as figurative of the sprinkling of the true blood of the true sacrifice for sin, and on the heart or conscience as standing in need of true forgiveness and deliverance from all guilt.

"And our bodies washed with pure water." Some of our commentators, we are sorry to see, cannot read or find

any reference, however figurative, and however far from any allusion to regeneration, but they must suppose an express mention of baptism. It is so remarkable in this case. The people, as we have shown, were the furthest from the need of the water of baptism, which had been used once for all, and yet in constant and continual need of the cleansing of the purifications, if they were to have such symbolic waters applied to their persons at all; and so we are here told, not of any sprinkling of the bodies of children which could not approach to the throne at all, or of adults who could; but of the whole body of the believer, whose heart had been sprinkled from an evil conscience; a source of guilt and actual and frequent sin? Because the child without conscience of sin, of guilt, of any kind of pollution, must have the whole body thus washed? No, as every one, especially every commentator should ithout hesitation say. Why, then, here stated? Why, but that there is a figurative reference to the bath of pure water which had to follow the sprinkling of the cleansing water of the sin-offering of the 19th chapter of Numbers alluded to, all of which must be studied and understood by anyone who would understand this simple and beautiful verse of sacred Scripture. We take the twofold reference to this complex rite of that chapter to the two and only two things, grand necessities of our being as guilty on the one hand, and sinful on the other; guilty and needing the application of the great sin-offering-sinful and in like manner needing the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, represented by the pure and purifying influence of the water, and applied to the whole person, not the mere outward body, as expressive of the gradual sanctification of the

whole man, and every part of the man, till not one spot could be seen or found to remain.

XI. 1 Peter iii. 18-22.—This passage has caused much inquiry and controversy with respect to the supposed visit of Christ to the intermediate state on the one hand, and to the waters of the flood and of baptism on the other. We have often wondered that there should have been any such controversy. All seems simple, when it is noticed that the spirits referred to were those of the people who lived in the days of Noah, and to whom, through the Spirit, Christ in the person of Noah preached, but who remained "disobedient," and so perished by the flood. Peter speaks of these spirits as in prison, not as visited by Christ to receive a new message of mercy, but as suffering because of the rejection of the mercy which the Spirit of Christ, through Noah, proclaimed to them, "while the ark was a-preparing." In keeping with this, the Spirit of God or of Christ is expressly alluded to, as then striving with these very persons, doubtless for their salvation: "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. vi. 3), the time here spoken of, when the long-suffering of God waited, "in the days of Noah." Here the Apostle evidently intended to glorify Christ, as in His Divine and Gracious Spirit, working in all ages and all places, for the salvation of mankind.

The interpretation of the important words which follow has been confessedly attended with great difficulty and even with much uncertainty. We give them as they appear in our ordinary version:—

"While the ark was a preparing: wherein few, that

is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, (even) baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (vers. 20, 21). In the R.V., we have—"Wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness (or, Margin, in the antitype) doth now save you, (even) baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation (Margin, inquiry or appeal) of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

1st. It will at once appear that the first and chief difficulty in both versions is due to the evident uncertainty as to the real force of the word, ἀντίτυπον, rendered in the former, "the like figure," and in the latter, "after a true likeness;" the exact bearing of either on the passage being very obscure, and the consequent interpretations given very uncertain. We have come to consider that word as alone fitted, if rightly understood, to be the best, if not the only key to this, the most perplexing clause of the passage. As a fact, we find it used only in one other place in the New Testament, namely, Heb. ix. 24, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands (which are) the figures (αντίτυπα) of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." We hold we are right in regarding this use of the word as of great importance, and even, as we have said, the best, if not the only real key to the clause in question.

We shall at once proceed to use it as such, and to see how far it may appear to answer the lock. We may say that we cannot imagine a better rendering of Heb. ix. 24. It is that of the A.V., which in this case, we greatly prefer to the R.V., which has not only "a holy place," instead of "the holy places" of the Greek, but also "like in pattern to the true," which, while certainly incorrect, is vastly inferior to the clear and correct one given—"the figures of the true"—true, plural, as well as figures. We repeat, then, that the rendering of the A.V. is in perfect keeping with the text of the R.V., whilst the rendering of the R.V. is inconsistent with the acknowledged text of both. We decidedly adhere to "the figures of the true," and, therefore, go on to interpret accordingly.

2nd. It may be well to keep distinctly apart the two subjects introduced, that of the flood, and that of baptism, only noticing the pronominal link between them, namely, the dative & of the A.V., "to which," and the nominative ô, "which," of the R.V. and of our best critics. Taking the latter, we may then render, "eight souls were saved by (or, safely carried through) water, which (water) as a figure (or, taken figuratively) doth now save us (or you) (as did the literal water of the flood actually save the eight souls within the ark)." In this way, the Apostle, by the clear contrast between the literal water and actual salvation on the one hand, and the figurative or symbolical water or use of water, and the figurative or symbolical salvation, on the other, leaves not so much as a shadow of a reason for the contention of many, that Christian baptism ever did or ever does put forth the slightest force or power in the case of a real, literal, or spiritual salvation. Let, as we maintain, the word, figure, or autitype, here so carefully and pointedly

used by the Apostle, in relation to baptism, be clearly and intelligently kept in view, and all will see in Christian baptism figure and figure alone, in the appointed representation of the grand reality of salvation:—We repeat, "Christ is not entered into the holy places, made with hands (of human construction), figures of the true, but into heaven itself, the true, the reality, the great eternal House, not made with hands, of Divine, and of no human structure, of which the others are here said to have been the mere antitypes or figures, as salvation is the like reality of which God alone is the Great Author, and of which water baptism is the appointed and most appropriate sign, symbol, or figure, which the feeble hands of man are fully able to set forth, and which, as we are expressly told in the Gospel of Mark, should follow faith and not go before —"He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved."

3rd. We might have been content with the old, the common, and oft-repeated, and we may add, the perfectly satisfactory proof of all this, as also here given by the Apostle in the words which follow:—
"Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh." Baptism is not the use of material water in washing the body, or in the putting away of the filth of the flesh, the purpose of the ordinance is altogether different, purely and alone for a spiritual end, or in relation to the conscience, or spirit, or whole being of man. This is in perfect and undoubted harmony with what we have said of the figurative nature of baptism or of the use of the water in baptism.

One remark more as to this clause in relation to the mode of Apostolic baptism. We may reason as to the meaning of the Greek word as we may, and critics may

be certain or not as to immersion being the proper, especially the only proper rendering of baptism (βάπτισμα) here. Well at least might all conclude that the Apostle clearly and finally shows that he at least, and doubtless all other Apostles, with all who walked according to their example, practised the baptism of immersion, and certainly not that of sprinkling a few drops of water, as, if they had been so accustomed to do, they would never have so much as thought, as in this case, of warning their readers against the idea of baptism, "not being the putting away of the filth of the flesh," or of washing the body by means of such a small application, not to the face, but to the frame. So much, then, for the Apostle's implied idea of the real mode of apostolic Christian baptism, in this the closing reference to what he here sets forth as to the mode as well as the design of this sacred ordinance.

4th. We are now led to consider what the Apostle does say as to the nature of baptism, or what it really is. We need not suppose that he gives a fully inclusive definition.

In doing so, we must, in the outset, inquire as to the right rendering of the Greek words, which we find unlike in the two versions, and in the view of different critics. We may here give those of A.V. and of the R.V., namely, "the answer of a good conscience" on the one hand, and "the interrogation of a good conscience" on the other. And, before proceeding further, we may remark that the Greek word, ἐπερώτημα, here used is regarded, by almost common consent, as signifying, in classical Greek, rather "a question," than "an answer." This has led to diversity of view with respect to the exact meaning of so important a sentence. At

first thought, we might suppose that the A.V. "answer" must be wrong. Great efforts are thus made to establish that of the R.V., "interrogation or question," as the correct. Meyer refers to the word as occurring only once in the New Testament, namely, here, and only once in the Old, or, in the LXX., Dan. iv. 14, in the sense of a question. Alford says: "But enquiry of a good conscience after God (i.e., the seeking after God in a good and pure conscience, which is the aim and end of the Christian baptismal life) . . . the inquiry which a good conscience makes. Very various have been the interpretations. . . . The objection to all these is, that they do not justify the expression as applied to the saving force of baptism: as, indeed, neither entirely does the meaning which I have given above." Nor, we may add, can any meaning prove correct which does what Alford desiderates—that is, which gives saving force to the clause, and thus sets aside, with Alford himself, the figurative nature of baptism, so clearly and expressly declared by the Apostle, and as we have carefully pointed out. We may add the view of two critics of great exactness, Webster and Wilkinson, "Έπερώτημα, The requirement, the demand of a good conscience toward God, that which the outward washing means, Jno. vi. 63; the ascertainment with regard to God of freedom from the guilt and power of sin." This approaches greatly nearer than that of Alford to what we deem the real idea of Christian baptism. Still we cannot find in the commentators such a solution of the difficulty as gives satisfaction. We may find our best key to the real meaning of the word in question, by most carefully considering the nature of baptism itself. In doing so, we need not suppose the case of infant bap-

tism, which is here absolutely excluded, by the implied presence of a good conscience, or a conscience of any kind. Nor can we suppose the case of baptismal regeneration, when the baptism itself is undeniably declared by the Apostle to be a symbol of the reality, or a figure of salvation. Nor can we take the view of Alford, that the good conscience spoken of is that of one seeking after God in a good and pure conscience. No, but that of a man, as set forth by Paul in Rom. vi. 1-5, even of one united by faith with Jesus Christ in death and burial for sin, and as also united by faith with Him in His resurrection to newness of life towards God, or for righteousness or justification. In this way, to be duly baptised, one must appear as, a believer in Jesus Christ, as already a real Christian, as already actually saved by Christ, or already one with Him by faith, his sins all washed away in the blood of Christ, himself regenerated, or a new creature in Christ Jesus, and destined to a glorious immortal life in Him. Only thus believing, forgiven, born again, a child of God and member of the Kingdom of Heaven, has any sinful man a real right to Christian baptism, as only a born Jew, or one legally constituted a Jew, could possess a Divine title to the older or Abrahamic rite, with all its subsequent privileges and obligations.

We have said that the words here translated, "the answer of a good conscience," are, according to classical Greek, to be rather rendered, "the question of a good conscience." The word, thus differently viewed, is certainly of no clear exact meaning. Perhaps we cannot do better than regard it in the sense of the answer to the question of a good conscience towards God; that is to say, that baptism being, according to

the Apostle, a figure of salvation, when one is baptised, or in a figure, or figuratively saved, washed from all sin, or from an evil conscience, cleansed from the pollution of the Spirit, as the body may be cleansed by water from the "filth of the flesh," the baptised rises, no longer in figure, represented as having an evil conscience, but now, in Divinely appointed figure, or New Testament symbol, with a perfectly clear, or Divinely created good conscience, through, as we are here told, no material element, but "through, or by, the resurrection of Jesus Christ," as Paul so forcibly says, "who died for our offences, and rose again for our justification;" and so, for the very purpose of securing a good conscience, "a conscience youd of offence towards God," with the grand end of henceforth walking with and for Him in future "newness of life." This seems the only way in which we can connect the idea of such a good conscience with the idea of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So far as this clause of the verse is concerned—viz., συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν—Archbishop Leighton, in his excellent Commentary on 1st Peter, almost agrees with this view of the subject, "Επερώτημα, The word is judicial, interrogation used in law for the trial and execution of processes; and this is the great business of conscience, to sit, and examine, and judge within: to hold Court in the soul. . . . The questioning or inquiry of conscience, and so its report or answer unto God, extends to all the affairs of the soul. . . . Now the conscience of a real believer inquiring within, upon right discovery, will make this answer unto God: 'Lord, I have found that there is no standing before Thee, for the soul in itself is overwhelmed with a world

of guiltiness; but I find a blood sprinkled upon it that hath, I am sure, virtue enough to purge it all away, and to present it pure unto Thee.'... And this the Lord does agree to, and authorises the conscience, upon this account, to return back an answer of safety and peace, and all this it doeth, not of itself, but by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which refers both to the remote effect, salvation, and the nearer effect, as a means and pledge of that, the purging of the conscience...

"This is the grand answer of a good conscience; and in point of justifying before God, there can be no answer but this, What have any to say to thee? thy debt is paid by Him who undertook it, and He is free. Answer all accusations with this, *Christ is risen*."

We may add, p. 108, Vol. II.: "Thus, then, we have a true account of the power of this, and so of other sacraments (so-called), and a discovery of the error of two extremes—(1) of those that ascribe too much to them, as if they wrought by a natural inherent virtue, and carried grace in them inseparably; (2) of those that ascribe too little to them, making them only signs and badges of our profession." We have been taking the first position all along, contending against those who put too much in them. As to the second class, of which Baptists are, by a great mistake, supposed to form a part, to which our own exposition of the passage before us may seem to make ourselves belong, we fully maintain, that while we hold that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are simply and solely, as pointed out by our Apostles, "figures of the true," ordinances symbolical of the profound and glorious reality, no one having and exercising the Divinely required faith in Jesus

Christ can possibly be an intelligent subject of the one, or a devout partaker of the other, and find either an empty sign or aught short of such a blessing as it was worthy of Christ to provide, and most precious and desirable for all people to receive.

5th. "Who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto Him:" and He being thus to go on with His glorious work of intercession, making good the justification or creating the good conscience, for which He was raised from the dead by the almighty power and redemptive will of God. All this gives the highest glory to the crucified, and now crowned, Son of God. He will thus assuredly complete the saving work of all the ages, historically and figuratively, by the great catastrophe of ancient times, with all its destruction on the one hand, and its salvation on the other; and also as set forth for all after times by the simple and sublime, and most sacred, figurative or symbolical ordinances of Baptism and the Supper of our Lord.

We have now reached the last portion of Scripture specially treating of the baptism of believers in Jesus Christ. We have found no real trace of any other in the whole New Testament. If we have rightly interpreted this passage, instead of finding in the use of the verb to save, connected with the rite, anything helpful to the cause of baptismal regeneration, or of any kindred doctrine, we have rather found this last passage the most express as a note of truth with respect to the symbolic nature of the Christian ordinance. And even if our exegesis be not accepted by some, we cannot but hold the description here given, as "not the putting

away the filth of the flesh, but the demand or answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," as at least demonstrating this, that baptism was not intended or fitted for young children, for those who had yet to be regenerated or born again, or for any but such as had already been so born, or had believed in Jesus for the salvation of their souls.

We may here note that, long after writing the above, we were glad to find that Prof. Candlish, D.D., in his handbook on the Sacraments (page 20, Note; 1 Peter iii. 21), sets forth the view which we had thought ourselves altogether alone in holding. He writes: "The passage ought properly to be rendered thus: 'water; which also as a figure saves you now, even baptism (not putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience after God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' For 'figure' most modern scholars would put 'antitype'; but the Authorised Version, translating it as in Heb. ix. 24, is quite defensible."

SECTION IX.

Post-Apostolic Writings.

WE have now treated of all the New Testament writings relating to Christian Baptism, and have found no reference to infant baptism, far less any proof of it. As has been acknowledged by many learned and enlightened Pædobaptists, we have no trace, in these writings, or in those of the more immediate times after of aught but the practice of the immersion of those who professed to believe in the name of Jesus Christ. It would seem more than strange that, if infant baptism was of apostolic date, no trace of it, no allusion to it, nothing but the most ample reference to the baptism of believers in Christ, could be found in all those writings in which we might expect, not only allusions to the general practice, but express statements as to actual cases of the baptism of the children of Christian parents. As we have thus far found, so we shall find as we proceed with the subsequent history.

We now turn to the early writings of the Church. In those ascribed to Clement of Rome we find nothing of such consequence as to deserve any special notice. The first and undoubted epistle seems justly assigned to the end of the first century. The second, by no means of equal authority, yet of importance as a very

early writing of the Church, might here be quoted as showing how early baptism had begun to be called, not simply *a sign*, as it ever ought, but even *a seal*, as it never should, as that rightly belongs alone to the Holy Spirit.

We come to the epistle of Barnabas, which is generally held to be of a date "not later than the middle of the second century," but which contains no testimony of at once decided importance and undoubted authority.

We shall pass over the Pastor of Hermas, in which we might quote what would tend to support the practice of immersion, but is not of such consequence as to merit special quotation.

We must, however, pay all attention to the writings of Justin Martyr, who may be regarded as an authority as to the question on hand. We may say that, whilst he is supposed to have been born about A.D. 114, he suffered martyrdom in A.D. 165; so that we may view his time of writing as that of the middle of the second century, or about a century after the active services of the Apostles. In this way, so long a period had intervened between the planting of the Churches and the state of these Churches in his day, that there can be no doubt as to the accuracy of his statements respecting the administration of the sacred ordinances or the general practices of the Church at large. The high place of Justin in universal esteem, and the great value attached to his writings, warrant all the confidence with which we may now view the testimony which he gives as to either side of any disputed matter.

Justin has long and often been quoted in support of the early practice of infant baptism, not in the way of direct statement, but as suggesting, in the opinion of not a few, what has been deemed at least a somewhat

strong inference.

I. Apol. xv. "And many, both men and women, who have been Christ's disciples from childhood, remain pure at the age of sixty or seventy years; and I boast that I could produce such from every race of men." Now, if we take this as certainly meaning that such children were not only placed under their parents and others for future instruction, but also baptised into the name of Jesus, then the evidence would certainly be strong in the favour of the practice of infant baptism, about A.D. 80, or not long after the fall of Jerusalem, or the time of apostolic activity. This has been often and strongly urged on the side of infant baptism. But it is one thing for people to be said to be made disciples from childhood, and another for them to be baptised in childhood. All Christian parents will begin from childhood to lead to Christ, and will carry on the work of discipleship till actual discipleship follows, and then, and not till then, according to the great commission, will baptism be administered. That no more or other was meant, or could be meant by Justin, we shall byand-by certainly find. We may add that the case of Timothy and his very early instruction or discipleship may, in the like words of Paul, strikingly illustrate.

I. Apol. lxi. We must quote the following at length:—
"I will also relate the manner in which we dedicated ourselves to God when we had been made new through Christ; lest, if we omit this, we seem to be unfair in the explanation we are making. As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are in-

structed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the Universe, and of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, 'Except ve be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Now, that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into their mothers' wombs, is manifest to all. And how those who have sinned and repent shall escape their sins, is declared by Esaias the prophet, as I wrote above; he thus speaks: 'Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from your souls; learn to do well; judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow; and come and let us reason together, saith the Lord. And though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white like wool; and though they be as crimson, I will make them white as snow. But if ye refuse and rebel, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.' And for this (rite) we have learned from the Apostles this reason. Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father and Lord of the Universe; he who leads to the laver the person that is to be washed, calling Him by this name alone. For no one can utter the name of the ineffable God; and if anyone dare to say that there is a name, he raves with a hopeless madness. And this washing is called illumination, because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings. And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus, he who is illuminated is washed."

We cannot but look upon Justin Martyr as one of the most important and convincing witnesses with respect to both the true subjects and primitive mode of Christian baptism. We feel sorry to find so early a proof of departure from the simple Scriptural conception of the nature of baptism, greatly, if not entirely, due to the misinterpretation of the vastly important conversation of Christ with Nicodemus-a misinterpretation which has spread, from early to present times, almost through all the larger sections of the nominally Christian Church, and done the most tremendous evil which, we may say, it is impossible for the human mind at all to conceive, even that of putting the simple symbol for the grand reality, of the second, and infinitely more precious, birth, and thus of laying the foundation of almost every error or perversion of the professedly Christian system. Keeping this erroneous conception of Justin and other writers ever in view, and making allowance for it, we shall find that we have abundant evidence as to what we deem almost alone important—namely, the question of the subjects and manner of Christian baptism. We can be at no loss to detect, amidst all details, the following indisputable facts:—

1st. That for nearly a hundred years after the active labours of almost all the Apostles, we still discover no trace of the baptism of a single infant, as there cannot be traced from the beginning to end of the entire New Testament; whilst immersion appears everywhere to be the one and only practice of the Churches during all these early ages, unless, it may be, in writings yet to be considered, in which we may meet with no evidence of any other practice, but solely with certain permitted modifications which, like all exceptions, ought only to be regarded as proving or confirming the general rule.

2nd. We have here a clear and broad distinction, as in the great commission itself, between the idea of discipling or making disciples, and that of baptising disciples, though, as just alluded to, the effect of baptism is now regarded as having greater, but less real, part in the work of regenerating than we learn from the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, and, consequently, what must be viewed as correspondingly so far defective in the work of regeneration before the administration of baptism. This is evident from these words above quoted: "As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly," which ought to mean, "As many as are converted to God, or regenerated by the Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ," which cannot be said to amount to so much as these words following seem to imply: "Then they are brought by us to where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated." This puts too little on the work of the Spirit through faith in Christ before baptism, and too much in or by baptism on the work of the Spirit, apart from the really converting or regenerating power of faith in Jesus Christ. Still, abundant truth remains to form a clear and certain testimony to the fact that only those who were capable of receiving, and actually did receive, instruction, could be held, even at the time of Justin, to be fit subjects of baptism; and further, the fact that these are said to be brought "where there is water," with what is elsewhere more plainly said, assures us of the universal practice of immersion at the time referred to.

3rd. But there remains a most remarkable statement, which we may go so far as to say, that it ought to suffice to put an end to the whole controversy as to the baptism of infants. If the baptism of such had been introduced by the Apostles, and practised ever since, we hold that such a statement could not have been so much as possibly written by any intelligent man, since the time of the Apostles. We refer to the words, "and for this (rite) we have learned from the Apostles this reason." Now we do not refer to the authority of the Apostles as here affirmed, as if we here dealt with the Scriptural argument. We solely allude to the statement of what was a great and important fact about one hundred years after the Apostles had been carrying out the great commission—viz., that all the baptised were of such age that, whilst all were at their natural birth unconscious, and had come into the world altogether apart from any knowledge or choice of their own, all, on the other hand, who were born again, and that at baptism, as so then held, were so according to their

own knowledge and choice, and had been "brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God, the Father, . . . he who leads to the laver, the person who is to be washed, calling Him by this name alone." All this can be accounted for only on the supposition of intelligence, of choice, of repentance, of desire to lead a new and Christian life; and such a beginning of it formed a perfect contrast to that of natural life. In our day who could possibly draw or even conceive such a contrast? For the birth and the baptism alike, of the mighty mass of professing Christians throughout the world, are, as to the persons themselves, matters of necessity, of ignorance, and of no possible choice. Justin's words, on the other hand, imply a practice in his day, according to which, the new birth and baptism were matters of knowledge and choice—baptism upon a profession of faith in Christ. All were thus Baptists in the days of Justin Martyr, or at the middle of the second century. Infant baptism had not yet been at least widely introduced; so that at least at that time, however long after it, the people had been, or continued from the time of the great commission, true thus far to the authority of Christ. Byand-by we may trace the unscriptural introduction of that exotic plant, whose baleful influence has pervaded and perverted, more or less, the nominal Church ever since. Of it, as of every other, Christ has faithfully pronounced the sure and certain doom, "Every plant

which My Father hath not planted shall be rooted out." In so saying, we are far from saying that all ideas of infant baptism are equally erroneous and injurious. So long as baptism is held to be simply and solely a symbolical institution, whilst that of infants is to be set aside as of no Divine origin, we would not at all compare it with the terrible evil of baptismal regeneration, which had been gradually appearing even before the time of which we have been treating, and, we may say, really preparing the way for infant baptism, and not, as many assume, the contrary.

We may say that we have dealt thus early with Justin Martyr, as giving such a decided and decisive testimony, and one which will yet be doubted by no one, that we may be the better prepared to deal with an earlier writing, not very long ago discovered, and which has created much interest, and which is sure to have an important place in early Church history in relation to the subjects and mode of Christian Baptism, and the Scriptural constitution of the Christian Church. We refer to a book, translated and published by Canon Spense, and called, "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles;" and also translated and published by Professor Schaff, D.D., with the title of "The Oldest Church Manual, called, 'The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.'"

Canon Spense: "The little work is one of rare and peculiar interest, and dates, we believe, from the last quarter of the first century. Its contents might have been read by St. John. It is certainly one of the earliest Christian writings we possess outside the Canon of the New Testament. By some it has been deemed

the earliest. It was known and held in high honour in the very earliest days, and some scholars think it formed the basis of much of the Epistle of Barnabas, and of some portion of 'The Shepherd of Hermas.'"

Dr. Schaff observes: "The *Didache* (The Teaching) fills a gap between the Apostolic age and the Church of the second century" (therefore we may say, between the Apostles and Justin, whose testimony we have just been considering), "and sheds new light upon questions of doctrine, worship, and discipline. Herein lies its interest and significance.

"My object is to explain this document in the light of apostolic antecedents, and its post-Apostolic surroundings, and thus to furnish a contribution to the history of that mysterious transition period between A.D. 70 and 150."

We may quote the entire short chapter on baptism, as translated by Canon Spense, and thus as free from any suspicion of the influence of party bias, as all really goes against the views entertained by the community to which he belongs:—

Chapter VII., p. 30, "Now as regards baptism, thus baptise ye: having first rehearsed all these things, baptise into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in running water. But if thou hast not running water, baptise in other water; and if thou canst not in cold (then) in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water upon the head thrice into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But before the baptism, let the baptiser and the baptised fast, and any others who can; but the baptised thou shalt command to fast for one or two days before."

On this chapter we may remark: - Whatever the

authority or the date of this wonderful book, here at least we have no reference to a baptism suitable to the case of infant children, as is admitted by both editors referred to. All are supposed to be taught, to believe, to confess, to fast and pray. Then they are to be baptised in living or running water. At this date, the early resort to rivers seems to have been still followed, or at least preferred. Such indicates the main rule. Then, in want of such, any other water may be used. If cold water cannot be had, warm may be used. Neither being had, water may be poured three times on the head, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This statement implies that immersion was the only form of baptism which was admitted, unless in the case of necessity, or in the total want of a sufficient quantity of water for immersion. Sanction to any future practice, when abundance of water was to be had, was not given, far less for the common practice of pouring or sprinkling of many past ages up to the present time.

For this exception, we have no apostolic authority, nor more than that of the judgment of the post-apostolic Church, and perhaps of only a portion of it, and that only in supposed cases of necessity. The question, therefore, remains for Christians to determine for themselves. In such a rare case as that of the want of sufficient water for (as here) the acknowledged Scriptural immersion, should Christian baptism be administered by a departure from the manner of the commission, or rather be delayed till so rare a want should be removed according to the use and wont of the modern successors of all primitive Baptists? We do not say on which side we would cast our vote. Only

we hold that for so rare a cause, and a cause so soon to be removed, no man's decision should affect the constant and Scriptural practice here implied.

We may add that whilst this book does not, as a whole, appear so valuable as it seems to have been so long deemed, this chapter on baptism may be held to be consistent with the date assigned to it—namely, half-way between that of the Apostles and that of Justin Martyr. Still, if such was the permission of the earlier date, it seems to have been set aside at the later; and even the modified form, as in the case of clinical baptism, for which could be pleaded the stronger reason of anticipated death, was regarded as more than doubtfully a genuine baptism at all.

We may quote the following from Dr. Schaff, p. 31: "Nothing is said of infant baptism. The reference to instruction and the direction of fasting show that the writer has in view only the Baptism of catechumens, or adult believers. Christianity always begins by preaching the gospel to such as can hear, understand, and believe. Baptism follows as a solemn act of introduction into fellowship with Christ and the privileges and duties of church membership. Infant baptism has no sense, and would be worse than useless where there is no Christian family or Christian congregation to fulfil the conditions of Baptism, and to guarantee a Christian nurture. Hence in the apostolic and the whole ante-Nicene age to the time of Constantine Baptism of believing converts was the rule, and is to this day on every missionary field. Hence in the New Testament the baptised are addressed as people who have died and risen with Christ, and who have put on Christ. Baptism and conversion are almost used as synonymous terms.

But for this very reason the silence of the *Didache* about Infant Baptism cannot be fairly used as an argument against it any more than the corresponding passages in the New Testament, which are addressed to adult believers. When Christianity is once established and organised, then comes in family religion with its duties and privileges. That Infant Baptism was practised in *Christian* families as early as the second century is evident from Tertullian, who opposed it as imprudent and dangerous, and from Origen, who approved it and speaks of it as an apostolic tradition."

We cannot but regard this as a piece of reasoning of the most wonderful character. Infant baptism admitted to have been virtually unknown for more than a century, because Christian families were virtually unorganised for that century. The arguments of Pædobaptists for household baptisms really given up. "Infant baptisms comparatively rare on every missionary field"-a sufficient argument for infant baptism that the Apostles and Apostolic preachers and their successors had no such Christian families to supply such as it would not have been something worse than useless to baptise; and that only after the beginning of the second century some men became sufficiently wise to discover that Christian families were fitly organised and adequately instructed to provide for Christian nurture; so that, in fact, Paul gave parents needless advice when he counselled them to bring their children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Dr. Schaff should have been a Baptist, and maintained that no man could uphold infant baptism without holding the Apostles and all Christians for more than a century to be either so ignorant as not to know of the use of such baptism till at least the beginning of that period, or so wise as to wait for ages till parents became what they had not been before, capable of the work assigned to them—namely, that of resembling the mother and grandmother of Timothy, in leading him "from a child to know the Scriptures."

Dr. Schaff, pp. 32, 33, referring to the mode of baptism, says, "The normal and favourite mode of Baptism is threefold immersion 'in living water,' i.e., fresh, running water, . . . Immersion must be meant, otherwise there would be no difference between the first mode and the last, which is aspersion or pouring." P. 33, "While thus preference is given to immersion in living water, the *Diclache* allows three exceptions:—

"(a) Baptism (by immersion) 'into other water,' i.e., any other kind of (cold) water in pools or cisterns. (b) Baptism (by immersion) in warm water (in the houses) when the health of the candidate, or the inclemency of the climate or season may require it. (c) Threefold aspersion of the head, where neither running nor standing, neither cold nor warm water is at hand in sufficient quantity for total or partial immersion. The aspersion of the head was the nearest substitute for total immersion, since the head is the chief part of man. There can be no Baptism without baptising the head; but there may be valid Baptism without baptising the rest of the body.

"Here we have the oldest extant testimony for the validity of baptism by pouring or aspersion. It is at least a hundred years older than the testimony of Cyprian. The passages quoted from Tertullian are not

conclusive. Bryennios would confine the exception to cases of sickness or to what is called 'clinical Baptism.' But the *Didache* puts it simply on the ground of scarcity of water, so that healthy persons might likewise thus be baptised (e.g., if converted in a desert, or on a mountain, or in a prison, or in a catacomb).

"We have, therefore, a right to infer that at the end of the first century there was no rigid uniformity in regard to the mode of Baptism and no scruple about the validity of aspersion or pouring, provided only the head was baptised into the triune name with the intention of baptising." Dr. Schaff forgets to add, provided always there was no water to be had sufficient for immersion. I am sorry to say that the Doctor's logic as to the mode, as also to the subjects, of baptism goes beyond all I have ever read or heard of in relation to either. Yet we most sincerely thank him for his excellent edition of the Didache, whose words demonstrate that the writer clearly indicates two things—that no infant had been baptised during the first century, and that all were baptised by immersion, at least unless where there was not sufficient water for the purpose. No Baptist would desire a more sure and certain testimony at the supposed date of the book.

We may now return to the Ante-Nicene fathers. We have already been led to treat of Justin Martyr, and would now deal with a somewhat remarkable passage in the writings of Irenæus, on which was based an apparently strong argument for infant baptism long ago by Dr. Wall in his celebrated "Book of Baptism," and which has been referred to in a note by the translator as invincible. We may say that these writings, "Against Heresies," may be dated, as we are

told, "during the episcopate of Eleutherus, that is, between A.D. 182 and A.D. 188, for Victor succeeded to the Bishopric of Rome in A.D. 189." We may add, Irenæus is said by some to have been born as early as A.D. 97, but this is clearly a mistake; and the general date assigned to his birth is somewhere between A.D. 120 and A.D. 140. He succeeded Pothinus as Bishop of Lyons probably about A.D. 177. Book II., chap. xxii. 4: "Being thirty years old when He [Christ] came to be baptised, and then possessing the full age of a Master [a teacher], He came to Jerusalem, so that He might be properly acknowledged by all as a Master. For He did not seem one thing while He was another, as those affirm who describe Him as being man only in appearance; but what He was, that He also appeared to be. Being a Master, therefore, He also possessed the age of a Master, not despising or evading any condition of humanity, nor setting aside in Himself that law which He had appointed for the human race, but sanctifying every age, by that period corresponding to it which belonged to Himself. For He came to save all through means of Himself-all, I say, who through Him are born again to God-infants and children and boys and youths and old men. He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age, being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and submission; a youth for youths, becoming an example to youths, and thus sanctifying them for the Lord; so, likewise, He was an old man (!!) for old men, that He might be a perfect Master for all, not merely as respects the setting forth of the truth, but also as regards age, sanctifying, at the

same time, the aged also, and becoming an example to them likewise. Then, at last, He came on to death itself, that He might be 'the first born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence,' the Prince of life, existing before all, and going before all."

In a footnote we find: "Renascuntur in Deum.—The reference in these words is doubtless to baptism, as clearly appears from comparing Book III. xvii. 1." In a second note: "It has been remarked by Wall and others, that we have here the statement of a valuable fact as to the baptism of infants in the primitive Church."

We hold they are wrong, and give what we deem a decision, after we have quoted what does seem a strong reason for at least an inferential conclusion.

The passage of Book III. xvi. 1 referred to, is as follows:—"'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed Me.' That is the Spirit of whom the Lord declares, 'for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.' And again, giving to the disciples the power of regeneration (into) unto God, He said to them, 'Go and teach all nations, baptising them in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' For (God) promised, that in the last times He would pour Him (the Spirit) upon (His) servants and handmaids, that they might prophesy."

The expressions "regeneration unto God," "are regenerated unto God," and the like, are assumed to really mean 'baptism,' 'baptised,' &c. When, therefore, we read, in the former passage, of infants and children, &c., "being sanctified by Christ becoming an infant for infants, a child for children, . . . For He

came to save all through means of Himself-all, I say, who through Him are born again to God (renascuntur in Deum)," we are asked to believe that Irenæus by these words refers to their baptism: that when he says these infants, children, and others, were born again, he means to say they were baptised. And on such ground infant baptism is said to have been practised in the early Church. Now this assumes a great deal which can by no means be proved, and goes against what has been proved from Scripture, and by the remarkable passage quoted from Justin Martyr, in which he sets forth the perfect contrast between the first and second birth, the one necessary or altogether apart from any will or choice of the child born, and the other thoroughly voluntary or a matter of choice, and hence absolutely beyond what any infant is capable of. Again, even though 'regeneration,' or the 'new birth,' was sometimes used of baptism, we cannot allow it to have been invariably so. For instance, in the very passage in which the expression, "the power of regeneration to God," is found, we are so far from having a proof of identity with baptism, that the great commission is quoted, expressly stating the making of disciples as well as baptising, whilst the Spirit is declared to speak in the disciples, and so to enable them to make disciples of Christ, and thus to regenerate to God. Hence we find it said in chap. xvi. 8: "Wherefore he again exclaims in his Epistle, 'Every one that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, has been born of God," which no one could consistently quote who traced the new birth to baptism, at least after the manner here supposed. However, we regard this as a totally mistaken interpretation of this peculiar

passage. Irenæus is opposing a practical belief that Jesus was no real man, but only a man in appearance, and illustrates his proof by His going through every stage of human life, from infancy to old age, every stage of which sanctities the corresponding stage in the lives of all, and saving all who are regenerated to God, infants and all. As Jesus clearly indicated that children could be saved, all that were so must be regarded as renewed by the Spirit, and so justly here put among the new born, provided they died without rejecting the great salvation. However, we happily find a passage in this same treatise of Irenæus, in which he speaks of infants being sanctified of Jesus in circumstances in which they could not have possibly been baptised. Thus in Book IV. xx. 12: "For as He who was born Christ according to the flesh, had indeed to be sought after by the people in order to be slain, but was to be set free in Egypt, that is among the Gentiles, to sunctify those who were there in a state of infancy, from whom also He perfeeted His Church in that place (for Egypt was Gentile from the beginning, as was Ethiopia also)." The real meaning is obscure, and perhaps fanciful; but here Christ is said to sanctify those among the Gentiles who were in a state of infancy, not certainly by baptising the infants, nor even by actually saving those in the sense of sanctified as here meant; for it is simply said, not that those spoken of formed a part of the Church then and there sanctified, but only, "from whom also He perfected His Church in that place." We, therefore, infer that the real meaning of Irenæus is, that all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, at every stage of life, from infancy to old age, are so sanctified by Christ at every stage, that all of them may be actually saved (saved at any period) provided they at any time are, not baptised, but, born again or regenerated to God—fitting all for heaven by His renewing grace. The passage, at least, can as little prove the baptism of the infants in Egypt, and all over the world, as those of the passage which is erroneously said to supply an actual fact of infant baptism.

We may now pass on to the time and writings of Tertullian, in the beginning of the third century, who, in his chapter on baptism, has a passage of very great importance in its bearing on our subject, and which caused not a little controversy for a very long time, and to which we would specially refer as throwing not a little light on the rise and progress of the gradual introduction of infant baptism into the early Church. We have not as yet found so much as one case of direct and express reference to infant baptism. The apparent reference to infants as sanctified by the infancy of Jesus. made by Irenæus, and just considered, we found to be of no force, by the example of a like reference to infants and the infancy of Jesus, also made by Irenæus, when there could be no baptism; so that we are still without a single instance of infant baptism, even after so many ages; and only now do we find Tertullian alluding to the actual baptism "in the case of little children," to give his counsel, that "according to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children." It has been said that this was simply in the judgment of this doubtless great man, but a man of somewhat peculiar opinions. Be it so, he was perfectly qualified to express the ground of his advice, and so to show how far that advice indicated

the recent origin, and therefore non-apostolic origin of

infant baptism. Now-

1st. Tertullian regarded it as a matter of awful and most dangerous consequence to be guilty of sin after baptism. Some even went so far as to hold that for such there was or might be no forgiveness. Though Tertullian did not go thus far, he and others had fears running in this direction; and hence this very natural prudence with respect to baptism. Chap. xviii., "But they whose office it is [to baptise] know that baptism is not rashly to be administered. 'Give to every one who beggeth thee,' has a reference of its own, appertaining especially to alms-giving. [With regard to baptism] on the contrary, this [precept] is rather to be looked at carefully; 'Give not the holy thing to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine; 'and 'Lay not hands easily on [anv]: share not other men's sins." We ask, if infant baptism had been from the beginning, and had therefore a baptism followed every birth, could such language or such advice with respect to delay, have so much as even occurred or ever been thus written by Tertullian or by any other at so late a date as, say, A.D. 200?

2nd. If infant baptism had been apostolic, and to all intents universal, and, for so many ages, would the thought of such special danger of sin after baptism have ever so arisen and so spread in the Church at this time, leading many to delay baptism, as well as to counsel delay as in this case of Tertullian? All the sins of childhood and youth, everywhere and always expected, would have forbidden the thought. Only on the supposition of adult baptism can we at all account for the possibility of its rise in a community of

Christians.

3rd. Do not, then, the words and the advice of this great and independent thinker prove to a certainty that infant baptism was now only being introduced, or had only recently been introduced, in fact, was at most but partially introduced; and that Tertullian, who had come to view the words of Christ to Nicodemus as to being "born of water and Spirit," as referring, not to regeneration itself, but to the sad delusion of baptismal regeneration, and so in cases of danger of death, to be administered or not, as might appear proper, would just give this counsel of delay? At any rate, why delay baptism, principally in the case of little children, if such had been all along and as by a command of Christ and His Apostles, practised from the beginning? Why use such words: "Why is it necessary—if [baptism] itself is not so [indispensably] necessary—that the sponsors likewise should be thrust into danger; who both themselves, by reason of mortality, may fail to fulfil their promises, and may be disappointed by the development of an evil disposition [in the infant for whom they stood]?" We find sponsors some time before this taking the place of the children to be baptised in order to give the answers which the children would have given if their baptism had been delayed, as it used to be till, as Tertullian says, "they became Christians." If this had been from the beginning, or even from an early time, universal custom would not have suggested such a reason.

4th. The next remark tells in the same direction. "The Lord does indeed say, 'Forbid them not to come unto Me.' Let them 'come,' then, while they are growing up; let them 'come' while they are learning, while they are being taught whither to come; let them

become Christians when they have become able to know Christ. Why does the innocent period of life hasten to the 'remission of sins'?" All seems clearly to show that people were doing what they were not accustomed to do. We do not inquire here as to Tertullian's opinions, we simply maintain that he expresses himself as advising people to delay what they were not bound to do, either by Scripture or by apostolic universal practice. He then stands between Irenæus, or certainly between Justin Martyr, and the time when infant baptism was generally adopted by the Church. Not only so, but we may thus trace the rise and progress of the innovation—a decided confirmation of what we have found is thus given. We may expect to find further testimony more advanced.

We now proceed to consider only one statement from Origen, which has been often quoted as of great authority because that of so great and excellent a man. Still, it takes greatly from its weight that Origen came on the stage at so late a date as A.D. 185-A.D. 254. It has been said, indeed, that he was of a Christian family from whom he might have much information. However, as his father fell a martyr when he was only seventeen years of age, all such suppositions are of little value; and we have only an assertion of his own as to which we know nothing of the authority. It is, "that the Church had a tradition from the Apostles to give baptism to infants." On this we would observe:—

1st. It is only said, that the Church received a tradition, only a tradition. Why, not that the Apostles had actually instituted or appointed infant baptism? If such had been instituted by them, we cannot suppose it

to have been ever given up or have needed any tradition to give it support or to prop it up.

2nd. The expression looks like one used for the purpose of commending what we believe, and seem to have proved, that infant baptism had been introduced some considerable time before, but, as in the case of Tertullian, was still opposed by many, and so required such support as that here suggested, namely, apostolic tradition.

3rd. Origen himself may have simply heard of it from some person or persons of his own times, and respected it as fitted to support the cause of infant baptism. But,

4th. The statement is to be found not in his Greek writings but only in the Latin translation, which is known to have been tampered with, which even Dr. Wall admits, so far at least to lessen its authority, and which was too often practised in after times to make use of a great name to support what had no sufficient evidence to uphold itself. We regard the testimony, therefore, of Origen as in every sense doubtful, so that, as yet, and about 200 years after Christ, we have no evidence of real weight in behalf of the apostolic origin of infant baptism.

We shall close with one other reference to the history in relation to our subject. We allude to that of Cyprian and other bishops in council in the year 253. A question was put by one named Fidus as to the time in which an infant ought to be baptised, whether before or on the eighth day, as in the case of circumcision. The reply of all present, sixty-six in number, was to the effect that the baptism might take place at any time after birth. We need not refer further to the

question itself, nor need we dispute the authenticity of the letter in which the answer is given. There is no need of any such controversy. We more than admit that infant baptism was generally, not universally, practised for a considerable time before this. Only, we think, we have fully proved that we have no evidence

of its being so before the age of Justin Martyr.

The only inference, therefore, which we can fairly draw from this letter is wholly adverse to the end for which it has been used, and goes to the side of proving that such baptism could not have been so ancient as the times of the Apostles, as all such questions must have been settled very long before, so that only our belief of the greatly later origin of such baptism can give anything like reality to so serious a council of sixty-six bishops and so solemn an answer to so exceedingly late an inquiry.

We thus close with the decided and satisfactory conclusion that neither the New Testament nor all the history really bearing upon the subject lends any real support to the doctrine of the apostolic origin of infant

baptism.

SECTION X.

THE STORY OF NICODEMUS; OR, THE GREATEST LESSON OF THE GREATEST TEACHER.

John iii. 1-16.

This portion of New Testament Scripture has been deemed the most comprehensive and precious section of the whole sacred volume. Some have regard as containing an epitome of the entire reveloped. We may at least be assured that it we have called it, the greatest lesson of teacher, sent by God to instruct and some life rightly understood and received, no a loss to know that he has been taughteach but God, and saved as no one of the context of the context

Yet perhaps no part of the through misinterpretation, be darkening the saving counthe nominal Church with as it is in Jesus or as it is

We need not refer to carried on, or to the ign regions, as to the cen forth by Him, who, apparently so little taught of man, had so comprehensive, so perfect, a knowledge of the oracles of God, that He could make any and every use of them for the elucidation and illustration of the more complete or absolute saving truth which He came Himself to unfold.

We may now proceed to set forth the meaning of this wonderful conversation, not as, of any special aptitude, but simply as, with many others, we may have been enabled to understand. In doing so, we may allude to the views of others only in so far as it seems necessary to do so.

Ver. 1. "Now there was a man of the Pharisees

Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews":—

had not long begun His public Messianic work. had been sealed by the miracles which His given Him to do, and, we might add, by ords which His Father had given Him to ve here an example of His more than ourse with man whom, He, the Son of ek and to save." We may, to some e of His mission by His treatment of superior man. At twelve years of out His Father's business;" and all He could be expected as His in His perfect manhood, we of the most earnest class of t rank as a ruler of best of educational advantages should we expect Nicovuld we expect Him to we ought to have an the opening reality. Do we find from the very first that "No man ever spake like this man"? Here certainly we find and might point out a mighty contrast between the educated Pharisee and the young untaught peasant of Galilee. We believe no simple and sincere mind could follow Jesus in His dealings with this and other inquirers after truth, with real intelligence and reflection, without coming to the conclusion that he had found "the Messiah, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write."

Ver. 2. "The same came to Jesus by night, and said to Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do those miracles that Thou

doest except God be with him."

We shall not refer to details, such as the spirit or motives which led to this nocturnal visit. We need only acknowledge the sincerity of the man, and the clearness of the light in which, from the miracles, he inferred, if not the true mission, at least a Divine mission of Jesus, who evidently treats him as sincere, and, we may say, desirous of instruction with respect to heaven, or as to heavenly things. We gather this from what Jesus afterwards said, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you (of) heavenly things?"

Ver. 3. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again,

he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The above remark will lead us to see the point of this seemingly abrupt and solemn reply. Jesus was wont to speak to the needs as well as to the hearts of His hearers. He does so here. In speaking as He did to Nicodemus, Jesus spoke not only with truth

and perfect fitness, but in the best way to set forth the truth which He came to make known to mankind. He could not, we may safely say, have uttered a sentence more appropriate or more far-reaching in relation to the kingdom, which it ever has been the work of the ages, and especially of Himself, to set up and to perfect in this world of fallen mankind. At the very outset He most truly and solemnly declares that that kingdom consists, and can consist only, of the twice-born children of men. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God."

This is to be regarded as no new doctrine, but as one, however diversely expressed, made known from the beginning. As men, by the first or natural birth, are ushered into one or other of the kingdoms of the world; so, by the second, or birth from above, they are ushered into the kingdom of God or of heaven. Jesus here says nothing of the nature of the mighty change. He simply announces the fact, with all the absolute assurance of its necessity in order to the possibility of seeing the glorious kingdom. In so doing, He speaks to the heart of every human being; and speaks as one from above, and as one who can search and try the hearts of all men. We would here only add, that, in the use of these solemn words, He may be said to condescend to invite all to bring the truth of His mission to the infallible test of universal experience.

Ver. 4. "Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

The Divine Teacher is not understood. He was accustomed to speak of spiritual things in the language

of figures, symbols, parables; and was, as now, sometimes greatly mistaken. We naturally wonder at the grossness of the idea expressed by such an one as Nicodemus. We are not disposed to regard him as insincere. He seems rather to have been seized with a strong and sudden amazement; and just uttered what he knew not, what at once occurred as certainly not meant to be true. Be this as it may, we simply go on with the instructions of Jesus.

Ver. 5. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and (of) the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

This, if not a clear or full explanation, could not but set aside every such thought as that uttered, and ought to have suggested such a change as could alone be traced to the Spirit of God. Greater familiarity with His own Scriptures and deeper experience of their lifegiving power, would have given clearer insight into the youthful Teacher's words, if they did not at once lead to the real meaning. In fact, the amazing blindness, which has befallen so many for ages, may well form at least some apology for the ignorance of Nicodemus. We need not say, that this great saying of Jesus has been a cause of endless controversy and confusion, instead of being a bright and beautiful light shining in the midst of the darkness in which every natural man finds himself who errs, like the Sadducees, in "not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." As this verse is the main source of all the errors, misconceptions, and controversies to which we have referred, and which yet remain as dark, as deadly, and as bitter as ever, we may prepare the way for a more clear,

correct and certain explanation, by, in the meantime, going on to deal with the words which follow:—

Ver. 6. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and

that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Here we find no reference to the water of the preceding verse. Some infer that this is in keeping with their view, in which they take the water to be simply figurative of spirit, "born of water, even the Spirit," and suggesting the penetrating, cleansing power of the Spirit. We rather think that, though the word water does not again appear, we shall find the real thing intended by the symbol of water will appear and occupy a most important, nay, vital place in the teaching of Christ, as to the new life or heavenly birth of such wondrous mystic origin. In fact, we hold that Christ here speaks after the manner of a not uncommon idiom when two things specially related have to be separately and consecutively treated of, namely, that of putting the one which is to be treated last, first, hence we have water and Spirit, not as we might expect, Spirit and water. In reality, by so doing, and thus actually treating of the Spirit first, the Spirit may be said to have the supreme place; and that such a method is real, we might illustrate by examples but will allude to only one, and that of a kindred nature with that in hand: we refer to Titus iii. 4-7. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Here is, first an implied reference

to the first condition of eternal life, justification, but "Not by works of righteousness which we have done:" then, secondly, a direct reference to the second condition of eternal life. sanctification: and lastly, a going back to the first, and incomplete reference, justification, "that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." We think, we shall find here (John iii.) both conditions of the same eternal life announced, namely,—the being born of water and the Spirit, or simply of water and Spirit; then, the second or Spirit is first considered, and the first or water is left for after consideration, as we feel assured will be found to be the case; only, not the word 'water,' but that which the word is used to signify, is finely and sufficiently set forth. This will appear, not at once, but we trust, as we advance, and as we consider the entire teaching of Jesus to Nicodemus.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The birth, then, which Nicodemus could not imagine, is here declared to be not the fruit of any physical process, but the work of the Holy Spirit, therefore spiritual. A contrast is thus drawn between the birth of the natural or fallen man, flesh of flesh, or the fleshly; and the birth of the new or spiritual man, the man born of the Spirit, as we find in ver. 8; or that which is born of the Spirit is spirit or spiritual. The old man, the flesh or fleshly nature, must be destroyed; and the new man, the spirit or spiritual nature, must be created and take its place. We do not wish to anticipate, else we would at once express the mystery: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." We simply add, that these

few words form a perfect key to the entire meaning of Jesus in this wonderful conversation.

Ver. 7. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

The ruler could not yet accept the words of Him whom he had acknowledged to be a Teacher come from God. He was simply in a maze, all perplexity, all seemed impossible. He marvelled greatly; Jesus simply tells him not to marvel, as if His words were utterly incredible. Jesus uses the plural, "Ye"; speaking, not of him alone but of all mankind. How emphatic the "must" is, here true of all without exception, who would see or enter the kingdom of God. No one need marvel as if so vast a change were necessary in order to see or enter a kingdom so unlike all the kingdoms of the world. Here it is meant, in the first instance, marvel not as if so mighty a change were impossible and perfectly incredible. The words of the Teacher ought to have been believed and received, however dark and incomprehensible. The darkest, deepest mystery ought not to be rejected, especially when testified by one acknowledged to have been certified to be a Teacher expressly sent by God. There were endless mysteries in this world in the realm of Nature, all around, which no man could unravel, and yet which all men do believe, and cannot but believe; as ver. 8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

We keep by this translation. The wind is literal. Christ might have given many like examples, but we cannot imagine any more suitable to His unique and mystic purpose. In many ways the wind may be used

as an emblem of the Spirit of God. Here it is so, as a mighty, invisible, mysterious agent, coming and going, as if with sovereign and immutable will, giving proof of its reality and power by its undeniable and often tremendous effects, it may be, with all the gentlest tokens of its presence, "the sound thereof" falling on the ear in sweetest notes. Everyone must believe what he cannot see, cannot comprehend, "cannot know whence it cometh or whither it goeth." "So is everyone that is born of the Spirit." Not "so is the Spirit," but "so is everyone born of the Spirit." One may know something of Him, may know enough to be assured of the reality and character, but not be able to trace the mystic origin, the special agency, the sovereign operations of the Divine Author. Still, the entire and grand result in the outcome of all, the new man, the new creation, the twice-born child of God and subject of the kingdom of heaven, had not and ought not to be doubted, but to be recognised by the spirit, character, actions, and conduct, as born anew, born from above, born of the Spirit, born into the kingdom of God.

Ver. 9. "Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be?"

He is quite bewildered. He receives no such knowledge as he had expected. All seemed unreal, impossible, beyond all belief; and yet there were the miracles, there were the infallible proofs of a Divine mission. How confounding! "How can these things be?" We are apt to suppose that the Ruler and Pharisee has and rarely had any parallel. Even yet, amidst all the blaze of both Old and New Testament light, thousands more highly and widely educated than he are just as ignorant, as unbelieving, as perplexed, nay, more sceptical of

the truth announced by the Prophet and Saviour of the world. Jesus knew what He said as no one ever knew before, or has ever known since. He had pronounced a law at once of universal human nature and of the spiritual and eternal kingdom of God. He comprehended all. He yields not one jot of His announcement. Rather he wonders at the wonder of Nicodemus, and, with all dignity and conscious superiority of one of the first of the nations, He replies:—

Ver. 10. "Art thou a Teacher of Israel and knowest not these things?"

Here we have an expression of the greatest surprise on the part of the great Teacher at the ignorance of the inquirer, who ought to have been perfectly able to appreciate the instruction conveyed. Anyone in his position ought to have understood His words. So Jesus most pointedly and strongly avers. Of course there was peculiarity and originality in the form in which He expressed the great Truth set forth, but not in the Truth itself. It was not uttered as if for the first time, or as if hard to be understood, or even as what he might have been supposed not to know. Jesus rather spoke as if He only uttered a well-known truth, with which every enlightened Israelite ought to have been familiar. The somewhat sharp question implies all this. The meaning and the force of this question ought to have been marked and pondered, understood and remembered, by all along the line of interpretation, from the earliest times to the present; and then the very greatest error of individual interpretation, and of ecclesiastical creed, and of Christian thought in all lands, might have been avoided, and the real and allsufficient source of right understanding been used with

general and abundant success. By making no proper use of this important and most suggestive exclamation of Jesus, innumerable teachers of Israel have almost ever since had their minds blinded and perverted as to the sole and sublime import of the words, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

The great truth of regeneration, and that, too, even "of water" as well as "the Spirit," ought to have been familiar to the mind and heart of every teacher of Israel, and clearly and fully taught to every pupil of such a teacher or well-taught scholar in Israel. Now, apart from Scripture, such could not possibly have been learned or discovered or known at the time of this visit by Nicodemus. He had learned it directly from neither Jesus nor His disciples. He had learned it from no one more enlightened than himself. He had not inferred it from what he knew of the baptism of proselytes or may have seen or heard of John's baptism. Above all, if held to be birth by baptism or baptismal regeneration, or birth in any way due to baptism, he could not possibly have been blamed by Him who knew all men and all things concerning such men, for a simple and sufficient reason that even the strongest upholders of that doctrine being judges, no such doctrine had at that time or for long after been revealed or made known to the disciples of Jesus; nor couldbecause false, as we hold—have possibly been; nor does Jesus complain of the ignorance of the inquiring Pharisee as simply a man of education, of observation, or of any general class of the people, but as expressly "A master of Israel" (A.V.), or "the teacher of Israel" (R.V.). As such he ought to have "known these things," ought, as

we have said, to have been able to teach, and to have actually taught "these things." Why? because, as we shall see, they were revealed in those Scriptures of truth or oracles of God from which all Divine and spiritual and saving truth could be known, and which contained all the sources of spiritual knowledge which were open for the instruction of all Israel, teachers and lcarnersa like. What Christ here taught, Nicodemus ought to have learned through the Scriptures of the Old Testament alone, as all ought to have learned centuries before, even ever since that volume was complete, nay, long before a large portion of it was written. Therefore, unless the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is to be found in the Jewish Scriptures, Nicodemus was not to be blamed as he was by the unerring Judge; or, not that doctrine, but the true and different and Divine doctrine of purely spiritual regeneration is alone and sufficiently clearly revealed and set forth in those Scriptures which Jesus told the Jews to search, as containing "eternal life," and as at the same time 'testifying of Him.' If such was not, and is not to this day, let all beware of how they treat the censure here expressed on the culpable ignorance of the Ruler. In such a case he could not have been guilty, and all should shrink from the implied terrible inference as to the knowledge of Jesus Himself. Let all, then, whatever their present creed, infer from this censure of the Unerring One, that unless, as we may repeat, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration not only is revealed, but is sufficiently clearly set forth in the Old Testament Scripture, so as to make Nicodemus censurable for the want of the knowledge of it; the words of Jesus do not express it; Jesus did not utter or intend to utter it;

and, if not here, it can be found nowhere within the Scriptures of God. Till, then, that doctrine is found in the only Scriptures with which Nicodemus was acquainted, let no one venture to put it into these most solemn, most awful words, far less let any one of the doctors of the Church appeal to these words, as has been so long done, as even giving a revelation of that fearful doctrine, and stamping it with all the absolute and most sacred authority of God. As, therefore, we have found what we cannot doubt to be the doctrine of Christ, abundantly and most assuredly to be the doctrine of these ancient writings, we take the words in question as declaring the infinitely great and precious doctrine of a new and heavenly birth, and that entirely apart from water baptism of any form; a new birth, designed of God and of Christ to take place before Christian baptism ought in any case to be sought or given. If here we would add at present more, it would only be to repeat over and over again that, after the censure of Jesus, for anyone who cannot find the doctrine of baptismal regeneration in the Old Testament to profess to find it in these words of Jesus would be a most wicked and impious impeachment of the just judgment of the Son of God so strongly pronounced on this inquiring, but so far ignorant, teacher of Israel.

Ver. 11. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness."

Now, with greatest patience and condescension, the Divine Teacher most solemnly assures His more than hesitating inquirer of His own perfect fitness to teach him, and to give all the instruction which he sought, nay, that what He had said was assuredly true, and

ought to have been welcomed as such, though he might not be able to understand. He speaks with authority. As He had said, Nicodemus ought to have known better from his own Scriptures. But not so knowing, he ought to have accepted all on the testimony of the acknowledged Teacher sent from God. Hence He says, "We speak that we do know." He, apart from the testimony of Scripture, knew all about the wondrous birth from above. He required no instruction, but directly knew it as a fact, as a necessity, and as no impossibility. He simply spoke of that birth as what He personally and perfectly knew. "And we testify that we have seen," not that we have heard, or read about, but that which we have actually seen, seen as a reality, seen as visible in many a man born of the Spirit, and transformed into a new man; and yet you will not believe what I say, you will not receive my testimony. Thus you unfit yourself for further and complete instruction. You accept not the truth by which you can be so changed as to be actually born anew, and so enabled to see and to enter the kingdom of God. Then He adds:-

Ver. 12. "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you (of)

heavenly things?"

We referred to these words as seemingly indicating that Nicodemus, in the opening of this conversation, had made some inquiry as to the heavenly world, or, in some way showed a desire for knowledge concerning it. This now appears correct. At first Jesus declares that such knowledge is beyond the reach of all but the twice-born; and here He puts the same thought in a slightly different form. He complains, on the one hand, of want of faith as to what He had said, and, on the

other, assures Nicodemus, that, if he could not accept what He had said of the heavenly birth, it was vain to expect to understand or accept what He might further say of the heavenly world. He puts this in a form which we might not expect. He calls the things which He had been setting forth, unsuccessfully, to Nicodemus, and which were really spiritual, "earthly things;" meaning, not of earthly nature, but simply of present place on earth. The intended contrast is thus not one of nature, but of time and place or taking place on earth, the new birth, and things heavenly, in the sense of actually existing, or to be, in heaven. The new birth, however spiritual, or of Divine and heavenly nature and origin, must take place on earth, if it would ever take place at all. As such Jesus had been speaking of it. He had not been speaking of the heavenly state which could not be seen, known, appreciated, entered, enjoyed, and the like, unless our nature was greatly and mysteriously changed, so changed as to imply or amount to what Jesus had most solemnly called a new birth. That the real contrast here drawn is local, things transpiring on earth, and things existing in heaven, is evident from what immediately follows.

Ver. 13. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven (even) the Son of Man which is in heaven."

Thus Jesus assures the inquirer that it is vain for him to doubt or refuse the testimony of Jesus as to these spiritual things which take place on earth, and yet to expect from anyone else the knowledge which he desired, of the things alone existing in heaven, for no one had ascended to heaven, or been there, and come down from heaven to whom he might resort and so receive the knowledge which he wished. Only one exception could be found, and that one was Himself, whose testimony he had rejected as to the kingdom of God as existing on earth, and whose testimony he would doubt or reject, nay, could not accept or appreciate as to the same kingdom as existing in heaven. Thus He says, "no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven (even) the Son of Man which is in heaven." He does not add, "and I who speak unto thee am He," but He delicately left Nicodemus to draw the inference which he ought to have been at no loss to do. He gives to Him at least a most wonderful and glorious revelation of Himself, if he was not so blind and deaf as to neither see nor hear. He virtually said, I am the only One who has ascended to heaven, and that because I am the only One who has come down from heaven. Again and again did He declare this as to Himself, as of heavenly origin, or as having come down from heaven, down from His Father in heaven, though a man, the Son of Man, and that born on earth. Not only so, but He adds a most mysterious and glorious thing, though come down from heaven and on earth, this Son of Man actually and now "is in heaven." Thus does He indicate to this doubting, disbelieving Pharisee the very mystery of mysteries, the united godhead and manhood of Himself, the long promised and adorable Messiah whom he ought to have fallen down and worshipped; and instead of doubting and questioning more, have ever after only said, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth Thee." However, Nicodemus might yet fail, having given all needful instruction as to the vast importance of the Spirit's work, which in some sense no one any more than he could understand; and having thus declared Himself to be that one who had come from God for the very purpose of not only teaching, but of renewing and saving mankind, He takes up the only thing which it remained for Nicodemus to do in order actually, in his own person and in his own experience to be born again, born of water and Spirit, to begin the new, Divine and heavenly life, or to escape his persistent and awful condition, and to have eternal life, the beginning of which was just the birth of which Jesus had been all along speaking.

Vers. 14, 15. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him, should

not perish, but have eternal life."

The great aim of Jesus was to lead His Pharisaic inquirer to see at least something of his need of the radical change of heart and life of which He spoke as a new birth of the Holy Spirit, though He did not, and, in a sense, could not, make him acquainted with its real nature. When one is convinced of the absolute necessity of such a birth, or call it simply a great and radical change of heart and character, he may be so far prepared to believe or receive what has been provided for the production of the change or birth intended and sought. In fact, the spiritual birth must take place, and the fruits of it, to some extent at least, be known to consciousness before the nature and reality of it can in any degree be understood. So we now find Jesus presenting to Nicodemus the truth which, received, would effect the work in view. He does so, we may say, by giving what would appear the very fittest illustration of it to be found in the whole course of Scripture history: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," &c. He reminded Nicodemus of a wonderful, and, we may say, most awful period of that history. The people of Israel, so infinitely blessed of Jehovah, the God of their fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob-so marvellously delivered from under the iron yoke of Egypt, and so miraculously sustained and fed, as if by bread from heaven, every day of their journey through the terrible wilderness on their way to the promised land, had fearfully sinned and almost ever murmured against their God and Redeemer; and, in token of His just displeasure, and in order to punish on the one hand, and to make them feel, on the other, how evil and bitter a thing it was to sin against such a God, He, we are told, sent a deadly kind of serpents amongst them, by whose bite many suffered the intensest pain, and died as if of an incurable disease. The whole bodily frame was poisoned, and could be cured only by such a complete renewal as virtually implied nothing materially short of a new birth; all who could be cured could only be so by being made to all intents new men. God, in mercy, resolved to save. Moses was instructed to make a brazen serpent, to put it upon a pole, to place it in the camp, and all were told that all who were bitten of the poisonous serpents, by looking to the brazen one, would be cured. They were thus taught their own sin, the mercy of their offended God, and that they were indebted to His delivering power from actual and deserved death, for, as we have said, being raised to new life; in a sense being born again and becoming new men. Nicodemus knew all this. Jesus draws His most amazing comparison: "So," said He, "shall the Son of Man be lifted

up." He had just indicated the way for at least the partial understanding of this by so evidently directing to Himself, as the Son of Man come down from heaven, of Divine and human nature, and, most wonderful, at one and the same time; nay, always in heaven and on earth. He now assumes the position and attitude of the Divine Messiah, and no less the office and character of the Saviour of the world. He spoke to this man of rank and reputation as if he were a simple scholar, and with all the dignity and authority of what He wasthe Son of Man, the Son of God, the Saviour and Lord of the world. Hence He completes the comparison, "So shall the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should never perish"-as the perishing Israelites would have done unless for the provision made and the look required—"but have eternal life." This could not have been understood by Nicodemus, as men understood after the death and resurrection of Jesus, this Son of Man. Still, he ought to have accepted the gracious teaching and testimony of his more than human instructor. He deserved to suffer. if, after all he heard, he failed to trust in Him whom he had believed to be sent of God, and who had so spoken as no man ever spoke or could speak to him before. By believing in Jesus he would have become a disciple, and, however yet only a learner, Jesus could have said of him, as He afterwards said of others who had no great knowledge of the truth, but had simply "believed on Him," "If ye continue in My word (then) are ye My disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Nicodemus would have learned the first and simplest, yet most important lesson of discipleship, that of believing in

Jesus as the promised Saviour of the world. At that early period no one could at first learn more. Jesus was speaking, not only to the person addressed, but to the world at large, and for all time, and could not have been at all fully understood, nay, not even in our own time. So we find the sublime truth of God simply taught the woman of Samaria still the simplest admission of Jesus into the heart, as that of father or mother into the heart of a child forms a precious and mysterious link of connection, implying a real inspiration of life, which amounts to a birth, which, if duly developed, will end in full manhood in Jesus and in Jehovah.

We have now found, at least, that Jesus has directed the mind of Nicodemus to two things in connection with the one thing mentioned in the third verse as necessary to even seeing the kingdom of God-namely, that of being born again or from above. We refer to the water and Spirit, which, we think, we shall find to be the means, or instrument and agent, by which the mystic birth is brought about. We have found out also that that means, medium or instrument, is not the water of baptism, but some water so made known, at least in figurative form, along with the Spirit of God, that Nicodemus was justly censurable, and actually censured by Jesus, because of his ignorance of it. We have now further found Jesus teaching two things in closest connection as bringing about the very birth treated of and declared to be essential-namely, the mysterious and invisible operation of the Spirit, and the use of something else which He calls water, whether literally or figuratively. And, as in the Old Testament. we find water connected with Spirit in the very result here spoken of, we must dismiss the literal, and

certainly hold by the figurative. Now, what are we to infer? He has said water and Spirit. He has treated of the one as Spirit. Has He treated of water? He had at least treated of something which He elsewhere sets forth as water, as the water of life, and that in the next chapter. Unless He means here as there the water of life, the only means of the new life or new birth, in addition to the agency of the Spirit, He does not speak of the water at all. We put, then, verse fifth in this form: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again of the water and Spirit of life, or of the Spirit and water of life, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." We shall take up this again, and also the view given in the Old Testament, when we have considered the next verse, in which He completes the treatment of the new life, and after which He goes on to deal with what, however important, we need not go on to consider.

Ver. 16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Nowhere in the whole Bible, or within the whole circle or course of literature, can we find a more precious, a more comprehensive, more inspiring sentence, or one more productive of the new and heavenly birth or life than this utterance of Jesus Christ. If here we cannot find the very fountain of the water of life, the use of which alone can create the Divine and glorious life of every child of God and heir of heaven, we may well despair of ever finding any such thing in this universe. In comparison of all the literal waters of the world, or all those used for purposes of baptism, one

can only wonder exceedingly at the very thought of Jesus, with this water of life fully in view, and to which He afterwards again and again referred as such a source of life, ever having any other in mind, whilst thus addressing Nicodemus. Well may millions be regarded as not only as ignorant as he, but as vastly more worthy of censure than he, for the desperate ignorance in which they have been led to put the lifeless water of baptism in the place of the infinitely precious and powerful water of life, in which we believe-if we do not see-the blood of Jesus mingles its life-giving virtues.

"God so loved the world." The thought of this might well quicken any soul dead in trespasses and sins; Divine love creating human love. And so vast was this love "that He gave His only begotten son," the greatest gift which it was possible for Him to give, or which could show forth the infinitude of His love, and all towards a sinful, rebellious, perishing world, a world which even intensely hated the Divine Father, whom it ought to have thus intensely loved. His own children had become His very enemies, and yet He loved them with an infinite love, and gave the dearest object of His Divine and fatherly love, and that with the grandest purpose of His heart, even that, "whosoever believeth should not perish but have everlasting life." Thus He points to this water of life, of which, if a man drink, he shall never die, as He said afterwards, and under a slightly altered figure, even of Himself as the bread of life, the bread come down from heaven, the bread which He said He would give for the life of the world. We have all that Jesus then said, or meant to say, of the one great subject brought before the mind of the Pharisee. He spoke of the Spirit of life. He

spoke of the water of life, and now He has pointed to a kind of water which answers all the purposes of giving or conveying all the life spoken of, and when anyone drinks in the spirit of the love of the Divine Father and of the Divine Son, and accepts the gift of eternal life from the Father, and through the Son, can he fail to rejoice with joy unspeakable to breathe a new spirit of gratitude and praise to the Divine Father, and while accepting a free pardon with the gift of eternal life, begin a new life, and prove himself born again, or "a new creature in Christ Jesus: old things having passed away, and all things having become new." In good time we shall see, as we have already asserted, that, what Christ here affirms. He elsewhere sets forth just as such water of life as He here declares for our faith and new life, and eternal salvation, and as we elsewhere find set forth in the Old Testament for the same end, that of a new birth, or heavenly life, for all those who believe in Jesus, the Son of God. Before alluding to the Scriptures, which Nicodemus ought to have better known, and from the knowledge of which he would have understood the words of Jesus, we may just add here one or two things, like this conversation, all from the writings of John, and all bearing expressly on the question of the new birth, and confirming fully the view taken of this important passage.

1 John v. 1, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," or of the Spirit of God, born just as Jesus said to Nicodemus—in order to enter the kingdom of God. This implies that whilst faith in Jesus leads to the new birth, that faith is created by God or the Spirit of God. Again, in John i. 11-13, we are told, "He came unto His own; and His own received Him

not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, (even) to them who believe on His name." Faith in Jesus thus leading to the new birth, as sons of God; and then it is added, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," or of the Spirit of God. Thus we find clearly set forth in the writings of John that, through the Spirit, all who believe in Jesus, or who receive Him, are born of the water and Spirit of which Jesus speaks to Nicodemus; and therefore Jesus received by faith, and the Spirit leading to faith, are just the water and Spirit referred to by Jesus. But why should Jesus represent Himself by water thus figuratively used? First, He could not well directly refer to Himself. Secondly, As a matter of fact, Jesus is found again and again to refer to Himself under this very figure, as we shall have occasion to show, after our treatment of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Ist. The doctrine of Christ, however peculiarly and strongly expressed, was no new doctrine at all, with which Nicodemus could not have been familiar, but was actually the doctrine of the whole Old Testament, from the very beginning, and was such that no enlightened Israelite could have failed to know, who simply knew and was familiar with the fall, not of a class of men, but of the whole human family, and so of the necessity of the deliverance of all who could possibly be saved. Every one who could say with David, in Ps. li., "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," could not fail to believe in the necessity of such a radical change as that announced by Jesus in the striking expression, "born

again." The absurdity of the thought of what Nicodemus expressed ought to have led him at once to see that that could not have been meant, and that, therefore, the language must be figurative of something totally different, and when Jesus spoke of the Spirit he should have seen, from his knowledge of Scripture, if he had had such, that Jesus referred to what He actually knew and was familiar with. If he, instead of being an unscriptural Pharisee, entering very little into the more spiritual portions of Scripture, had been like Nathanael, "an Israelite, indeed, in whom there was no guile," he would have treated the whole conversation very differently, and felt that the young teacher was letting him further into the secret of the Divine word than he had been able to see before. We hold, then, that the ignorance of Nicodemus was due, not to the absence of the doctrine of Jesus from the Jewish Scriptures, but to the Pharasaic blindness of the ruler as to Spiritual things. The whole Old Testament, then, ought to have led him to have held the idea of a great and radical change being absolutely necessary for salvation, or for fitness for heaven, that the statement of it ought to have been recognised as that of an old familiar truth, it may be, put in a new form, or old friend appearing in a new garb.

2nd. The doctrine of Jesus has been in various passages of Scripture so vividly and so expressly set forth that every enlightened and spiritual Israelite should have been perfectly able to discover it, even under the special form in which Jesus put it. We shall point to one or two of these.

First, and perhaps foremost, we would allude to Ezekiel xxxvi. 23-28, "And I will sanctify My great

name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you; and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do (them). And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God."

Here "water and Spirit" are put together, and that in the same order as in the words of Jesus. An entirely new heart and spirit are so promised, that Nicodemus and all who studied and delighted in the promise, could not but infer a perfect change effected; nay, they might have rejoiced in those who experienced it as really new men, or as virtually born of God, born from above, just so born as Jesus declared to be needful for seeing and entering the Kingdom of God. Further, the clean or cleansing water spoken of was of such a nature as to make it peculiarly fitted to represent the great sacrifice of the Cross on which the Son of Man was to be lifted up, made the object of faith in order to salvation, or as a source of eternal life, implying the new birth of water and Spirit, of which Jesus had so solemnly spoken. We remark the

special fitness of this water, as it really was not clean or pure water, but cleansing water, or the water of separation, which was intended to represent the cleansing from sin. The character of it is described in Numbers xix., in which the sacrifice of the red heifer as a sin-offering is described, and declared to be wholly burned, and the ashes required to be kept, and mixed with water, which was to be used for the purpose of cleansing from sin in all after times, and was called the water of separation. The virtue of this water, therefore, was not at all in its being itself clean or pure, which it was not, but in the fact that it derives its ceremonial quality from the sacrifice for sin, with whose ashes it was mingled.

Nor can we find a single case of like virtue in the whole ceremonial system more truly representative of the great sacrifice, the Blood of the Cross. Thus Jesus might almost be said to refer expressly to the Divine use of this great type or symbolical representation of Himself, in whom He told Nicodemus, he and all were to believe in order to be cleansed from all sin on the one hand, and inspired with a new and eternal life, and so born of God on the other. The passage in Ezekiel ought to have been most familiar to every "Israelite indeed," and to have formed a key to all such words of Jesus, as He at this time and afterwards spoke with more or less obscurity, especially to such as might be little acquainted with the more spiritual portions of their own Scriptures.

We think this ought to suffice. We only add, that Dr. Pusey, who may be regarded as the most earnest and learned advocate of baptismal regeneration, acknowledges the correctness of the reference of this

passage to the doctrine of Jesus; only, instead of admitting it to set forth the direct and exclusive reference to the new birth, he regards it as a prophetic anticipation of the new birth by water and Spirit, in the sense of Christian baptism. Thus a rite or symbol of the New Testament is to be believed to have been prophesied in one of the most glorious prophecies of the old, a prophecy of the greatest work of God, which He could possibly accomplish for His fallen people, and in their real and rich experience in all after times! Such a thought may well be a perfect wonder on the one hand, and a perfect proof on the other, that Dr. Pusey was at the greatest loss to defend his mistaken and, we must add, monstrous doctrine. We are tempted to say, and we think, with still greater appropriateness, in the words to Nicodemus, "Art thou a teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

We shall next turn to-

Secondly. "The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD, the God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will turn again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. . . And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of Hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bands; and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (Jer. xxx. 1-9). "At that time,

saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. . . . The LORD appeared of old unto me, saving, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (chap. xxxi. 1). "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be My people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. ..." (ver. 31-34). "Behold, I will gather them out of all the countries, whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me for ever; for the good of them and of their children after them; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; and I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. . . . " (chap. xxxii. 37). "Behold,

the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness" (chap. xxxiii. 14). We have quoted at length here as pointing to the coming Messiah which should have clearly directed to the time and spiritual character of the change referred to.

Thirdly. "Yet now hear, O Jacob, My servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen, Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, (which) will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, My servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up (as) among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I (am) the Lord's; and another shall call (himself) by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe (with) his hand unto the Lord and surname (himself) by the name of Israel" (Isa. xliv. 1–5).

We should have taken note of the fact, that, in the last case, as now in this, and in fact, of every case affording a proper illustration, no one whatever is said to act as an agent but God alone. He and no man is said to sprinkle the cleansing water, and, therefore, to do, not that literally, but what that figuratively or

symbolically means. So here God and no mere creature, pours out the pure, refreshing, fertilising showers on the dry and thirsty soil. No human baptism could in any way be meant, as no power of the herald, or of any disciple of Jesus, could baptise with the Holy Spirit, as on the Day of Pentecost.

In this promise of Isaiah, we have at least that of really life from the dead. Unless for the waters or floods poured out or poured down, the parched land would remain barren and unproductive. We might take these waters as figurative of the Spirit given at the same time. However, we look upon them as figurative, not of the Spirit Himself, or even of the energies of the Spirit put forth, but of the varied means used by the Spirit in order to effect His lifegiving ends, in fact, in all the cases on hand, we regard water and Spirit, or Spirit and water, to indicate the secret operations of the Spirit, together with the known means of bringing about the new life or more abundant life promised, and thus to be secured. In fact, in the case of the new birth in John iii., we have not a shadow of reason to doubt that the combined powers and influences of the Spirit of God, and the truth as it is in Jesus, are meant and clearly indicated when the entire passage is studied, the secret operation of the Spirit, and the faith spoken of in the Son of Man as lifted up, or in the Son of God as given for the salvation of all who believe. So God would give the needful instructions and all the needful blessings by which the promised Spirit would bring about the abundant life, set forth in the simple and beautiful words which follow, "And they shall spring (as) among the grass, as willows by the water courses," the

children do well as fathers of Israel thus blessed; and they thus made new men, new creatures, thus born again, would act as now became the children of God, and Israelites, indeed, would do what all now made Christians ought to do,—even to profess to be, "New creatures in Christ Jesus." "One shall say, I (am) the Lord's; and another shall call (himself) by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe (with) his hand unto the Lord, and surname (himself) by the name of Israel"—Just do, we may say, under the Gospel age, what everyone made a disciple or born again should do, be "baptised into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

We shall refer to only one other Old Testament illustration, which ought to have made every true Israelite, not to say every teacher of Israel, familiar with the fundamental truth underlying the words of Jesus to Nicodemus. We allude to—

Fourthly. Psalm li. 2, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, "Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." "Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me (with Thy) free Spirit. (Then) will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."

Here we might be told that we have the case of a fallen saint, and not of a converted and new-born sinner. However, that fallen one speaks of himself as

having lost his first grace, and prays for a full restoration of it, and thus he really sets before us the work of God as originally wrought in him and for him, and so giving us the clearer insight into all originally done in order to the grand result or radical change, in which all ought to have recognised nothing less than what Jesus was pleased to call a new birth, a birth of water and Spirit. Here, as in our two other examples, we have water and Spirit, and that in the same order, or, in no instance, Spirit and water. So Paul speaks of 'Christ being formed anew' in the erring Galatians. Gal. iv. 19.

Ver. 2. "Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." This language is purely coremonial, but it refers to no mere ceremony of man, but to the grand reality effected by the hand of God alone.

Ver. 5. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." A full confession, not merely of actual transgression or sin, but of his fallen state, the corruption of his very nature, just of what Jesus said expressly and universally, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and we must add, as all ought to acknowledge, that he, who thus knows himself to be impure and sinful from his very birth, cannot but know that, to all intents, he must in reality pass through a new birth, if he would be saved, restored to his lost sonship to God, or be, as Jesus so solemnly declared, so much as able to see or be fit to enter the kingdom of God.

Ver. 7. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Here the reference is to the cleansing water of separation, which was sprinkled with hyssop on the person desiring to be

ccremonially cleansed from any sin. After this sprinkling, the entire person was to be washed or bathed in pure water; and then he was to be regarded or to regard himself as now clean. The language of ceremony is again used, but he asks no man to sprinkle him, and asks for something infinitely more precious than what any man could do for him, or what any water, pure or mixed, could effect, even the offended God to forgive, and to make him truly clean. Again, let it be fully noted that the One who works, is no man immersing in water or sprinkling with water, as any man might do, as John the Baptist or any of Christ's disciples. It belonged to the prerogative of the Divine Father alone to baptise with the Holy Spirit. So, if the suppliant was indeed answered, he received great blessing from above, "I shall be whiter than snow."

Ver. 10. "Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me." If any words, under the old dispensation, could at all express the very idea of Jesus, surely these might be regarded as sufficient to have, if studied, enabled Nicodemus to have escaped the just censure of Jesus; and now they ought to teach all of us, that, whilst no baptismal regeneration could have been or could be found in the Old Testament, the doctrine of Jesus of a new birth by water and Spirit, and that by the sole prerogative of God, was most amply revealed and most strikingly illustrated here. Not only so, but the Spirit as well as the water, is again and again referred to—as we may now simply show, by quoting the next two verses of this most impressive, and never-to-be-forgotten psalm.

Vers. 11, 12. "Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto

me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me (with Thy) free Spirit."

Having now done all that we think needful with respect to the Old Testament revelation of the pure and simple doctrine of Christ of regeneration, not by literal water and Spirit or by baptism, but by the agency of the Spirit and faith in Himself as the gift of God for the salvation of the world, we may now proceed to treat of what remains of our argument, partly by dealing with the structure of the chief sentence, which we have left on purpose till now, and partly by considering certain general facts and principles which ought to confirm our whole previous conclusions.

Ist. The peculiar structure of the language of Jesus. First. "Born again" or "born anew." We have no real objection to either translation; yet as $\alpha \nu \omega \theta \epsilon \nu$ more literally means "from above," we somewhat favour its use here, especially as this includes the other, "again" or "anew"; and at the same time is really in perfect keeping with the truth expressed.

The use of the very bold and striking figure of a new birth would so far tend to obscure the meaning, and prevent an unspiritual Pharisee from at once understanding: yet must be regarded as a fine example of that grand originality of manner as well as of mind, which distinguished the greatest Teacher ever sent by God to our world, and now remains of such great and lasting advantage to all earnest students of Scripture as to heighten our conceptions of the Person and mission of this Teacher of all teachers.

Secondly. "Born of water and (of) the Spirit" (A.V.); "Born of water and the Spirit" (R.V.) We have been

accustomed to prefer the more literal and simple, "Born of water and Spirit." Certainly, we have no article here, but of course this does not prove that the Holy Spirit is not intended. We must simply be guided by what appears the more appropriate sense. At anyrate, if we keep by the Revised Version, "Born of water and the Spirit," we must at least reject the second "of" of the Authorised Version, "Born of water and (of) the Spirit." We must keep by one $\hat{\epsilon}\kappa$, "of"; and then we shall the more clearly see the connection between "water and the Spirit;" or "water and Spirit." This is of more importance than would at

first sight appear.

We might treat of two or three interpretations which might be grammatically put upon the words, and which would admit of the really proper and only one being determined by the real evidence or circumstances of the case. Thus, it is said, the word "Spirit" is literal, and, therefore, the word water must be so too. However, this is to press matters too far. If we put "even" for "and," as we certainly may do, then we have "water, even Spirit," or, "water, that is, Spirit;" and in this way the symbolic use of water would serve a good purpose, that of so pointing to the qualities which might not be readily suggested by the word Spirit alone, or might fail to point to the double work intended of both, removing corruption and imparting or inspiring new life. However, we do not adopt this view, though we deem it more natural than that of baptismal regeneration. A rather different meaning may be attached to the clause, if we translate, as we have suggested as more literally correct, namely, "Born of water and Spirit," in which case both words would

be taken figuratively, and neither literally. We have gone all along on the ground of a grandly figurative use of water; and, according to this version, we would decidedly proceed on the ground of a like grandly figurative use of Spirit, or, not the personal Holy Spirit, but that Spirit viewed as given, poured forth, shed abroad, and the like, in the manifold energies, influences, operations, and the like, combined with all the truth as it is in Jesus, the whole Word of God, the law, for example, which is declared to "convert the soul." At the same time, the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit should not be kept in the background in the great work in question. We need give no other, unless that which so many hold to be the only fair or even possible meaning, involving the doctrine of Baptism, and of baptismal regeneration. Let us, then, consider that; and, in so doing, we may quote the words of one whom all will account one of the most learned as well as most earnest upholders of the doctrine-Dr. Pusey, "Tracts for the Times," Vol. II., "Treatise on Baptism," p. 25:- "But, secondly, not only is there nothing in Scripture to sever Regeneration from Baptism, but Baptism is spoken of as the source of our spiritual birth, as no other cause is, save GoD: we are not said, namely, to be born again of faith, or love, or prayer, or any grace which God worketh in us, but to be 'born of water and the Spirit,' in contrast to our birth of the flesh: in like manner as we are said to be born of GoD: and in order to express that this our new birth of God is, as being of GoD, a deathless birth, it is described as a birth of seed incorruptible, in contrast with our birth after the flesh, of corruptible seed through our earthly parents. The immediate causes of our birth are not

yet spoken of; only we are taught that it is of God, and in itself immortal, if men will not part with it, or occasion God to withdraw it. Holy Scripture, indeed, connects other causes besides Baptism with the new birth, or rather that one comprehensive cause, the whole dispensation of mercy in the Gospel, (for this, not the written or spoken word, is meant by the 'word,' 'the word of truth'): but it at once marks, by the very difference of language, that these are only more remote instruments: we are not said to be born of them, as of parents, but by or through them. They have their appointed place, and order, and instrumentality, towards our new birth, but we are not said to be born of them. Thus we are said to be 'born' (as was noticed) 'of seed incorruptible,' i.e., of an immortal birth, but only 'through the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever; 'in Jesus Christ have I begotten you through the Gospel:' 'of His own will begat He us by the word of truth;' no other instrument being spoken of as having the same relation to our heavenly birth as this of water."

As we read these words of Dr. Pusey, we seem warranted to infer the $\dot{\epsilon}\kappa$, "of," refers as really to the water as to the Spirit, that the water is in no sense used symbolically of the Spirit by whom the spiritual change is alone and really effected. He speaks of the $\dot{\epsilon}\kappa$, or of as related to the water and the birth, as we speak of the same of in relation to parents and natural birth; so that the of makes the material water, acting along with the living Spirit, a thoroughly causative power or factor in the spiritual birth. Thus he goes on to say, "'born of water and the Spirit,' in contrast to our birth of the flesh," 'or of our parents,' which seems to imply the combined origin of water and the Spirit, as in the

combined origin of our natural birth. We can suppose nothing less or else than this; and, besides, we hold that the use of only one $\epsilon \kappa$, of, and that of both water and Spirit, and connecting both as one combined causative origin of the birth, our idea of his meaning is just what he seems fully to say, έξ ύδατος καὶ πνεύματος, "of water and the Spirit, or of water and Spirit." The ex thus makes the one as really causative or originative of the birth or one result as the other. This has been obscured, or rather hidden, by the introduction of a second 'of' in the A.V., which is not in the original, "born of water and (of) the Spirit." Setting this second 'of' aside, and keeping the genuine translation, "born of water and the Spirit," or "and Spirit," we see that both, as we have said, are really causatively connected with the result, though they may not be of equal causative power. In this way, the upholders of baptismal regeneration cannot get out of the difficulty by saying that the water is symbolical, or a mere modal medium, while the Spirit is the only real agent. Nor can it be said that the water refers to the baptism which may take place to-day, whilst the birth, the work of the Spirit, may not follow, it may be for days, or months, or even years, if ever after, as held by some; but, in fact, implying two births, and not only one. What, then, really have we? We have material water, in some sense and to some extent, causative of a purely immaterial or spiritual effect. We have thus a material element endowed with a magical power over the human spirit; a cause of one kind, or of one essential nature, effecting a change of a totally different kind, or of a totally different essential nature; a literal change of heart effected, at least partly, by a material

application to the material frame. We get free from all this by doing as we have done—namely, by making the water figurative of the word or of Christ as believed or received, and thus as really and spiritually causative as the Holy Spirit Himself, and just so imperfect a combination as the one $\epsilon \kappa$ or of here used fully indicates and really requires; so that the peculiar structure of the main sentence not only falls in with the whole Bible in treating the water as figurative of the means of grace, but appears to admit of no literal water, or of no real allusion to baptism at all.

We may feel amazed beyond measure to find one of such standing, in order to give the greater exclusive force to the use of the preposition $\epsilon \kappa$ or of, here saying: "We are not said to be born of faith, or love, or prayer, or any grace which GoD worketh in us, but to be 'born of water," and, as this would be, that one might be born of a part or a power, which he had already got by his birth, Dr. Pusey, like Homer, was certainly nodding when he was writing of being 'born of a grace,' as if such a grace formed no part of the new birth. We shall say no more on the language of the great utterance of Jesus, but go on to deal with certain proofs of the true meaning of the whole-namely, the necessity of a new birth, and that of the Spirit in the use of the truth as it is in Jesus, the real incorruptible seed of the Divine and immortal life.

In the outset, here, we may say that the idea of baptism, and not that of the great and most necessitous new birth itself, seems most unworthy of the great Teacher and Saviour of Nicodemus. Jesus knew His opportunity, and knew such would never occur again; and, to suppose that He would speak, not of the grand

reality which Jesus said he ought to have been familiar with, and turn aside to speak of a baptism which its keenest upholders confess, if a true baptism at all, was at least not then known by anybody—certainly could not have been known by Nicodemus, though Jesus expressly says he ought to have known all about the doctrine which He announced; we say, to suppose such a thing is to throw suspicion on the very professed mission of Jesus Himself. And we cannot but express our wonder at the state of mind which can permit of our teachers and preachers, our leaders of Christian communities, being at such a loss to know what water Jesus here referred to, seeing we find Him so often alluding to a water which, if drunk, would just do what He declared the water and Spirit alone could donamely, give new life, or lead to a new and everlasting birth. We have only to turn to the next chapter of this gospel, and the story of the woman of Samaria, who evidently drank of the water in question and at once experienced the new life, the new birth which Nicodemus ought to have known about, at least believed the testimony of Jesus concerning it, and asked and received the richest possible blessing which Jesus always could, and was always willing, to bestow. Let it be observed that we have Christ Himself, the uplifted Son of God, to be represented delicately, yet surely, under the figure of the Water of Life; and this is just what we find Him doing in speaking of the water which He would give, if asked, to the woman of Samaria. Thus, too, He says again, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth in Me shall never hunger; and he that cometh unto Me shall never thirst." No figure of

speech was of more familiar use in the teaching of Jesus than that of water, the living water, the water of life. It is a great mystery of self-righteous Pharisaic spiritual blindness to mistake the true water of life of which Jesus often spoke for the mere lifeless water of baptism of which He never so spake, and which never did or could give life to the world, or to a single sinner dead in trespasses and sins within its wide domain. How soon the early Church, influenced by the remains of heathenism, fell into the fearful mistake of magnifying signs and ceremonies at the expense of spiritual realities and glorious truths! Romanism was the terrible, and full, and final result; and the whole Church of Jesus and world of mankind have reaped, and are reaping, the awful consequences.

We might refer to further illustrations of the use of the connected agency of the Spirit and instrumentality of the truth, in reality of the combined operation of the water and the Spirit here so impressively spoken of, and that, as said, nowhere more clearly and intelligibly than in the writings of John, wonderfully in chap. vii. 37–39: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet (given), because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

Here Jesus appears in full and true character, giving loud, distinct utterance, in the hearing of the people, of the doctrine which He had less clearly, but not less really, expressed to Nicodemus. The thirsty soul had

the only fountain of living water right before him, even Jesus, who engages to give him to drink; nay, to give him so to drink as to make him in some high sense like Himself, a spring or fountain of the water of life; nay, out of him are to flow even rivers of living water; nay, further, these rivers He spoke of as "the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive." Oh! shall we not exclaim, what a perversion it is of the Divine and saving words of Jesus, to view Him as putting the dead material waters of baptism,—however important as symbolical of the reality,—in the place of the living spiritual water of eternal life, even no less precious a fountain than Jesus, the very light and life of the world.

In the preceding or sixth chapter, verses 27-65, which we need not fully quote, we find such a revelation of the truth as to the new life and new birth, as ought to set all reference to baptism in the case of the third chapter aside for ever, and leave the whole Church, in all its branches, in the light of perfect sunshine, as it will do yet, and that for ever and ever. Jesus is another figure, but a figure of precisely the same thing-strange that, under the same spiritual blindness, as turned the water of Divine and eternal life into the mere material water of baptism, the Bread of Life, the Divine and Spiritual Bread which came down from heaven, "of which if a man eat he shall ever live and never die," has been turned into the mere material bread of the commemorative rite of the Lord's Supper. Clearly Jesus traces the new life and so the new birth to the eating of that bread, which Jesus certainly says consists in simply believing in Himself or in truly receiving Him.

What is to be specially noted here is the fact that Jesus demonstrates the truth of this, nay, shows that this eating or believing in Himself is fully tantamount to being "born of water and Spirit," the change essential for entrance into the kingdom of God. We shall not add much to this most precious passage, but leave it to individual study and prayerful reflection. Just one point we would specially allude to as peculiarly bearing upon the great question in hand. Let it be distinctly noticed that Nicodemus is virtually, though not verbally, informed by Jesus that, till a man is "born anew," and that by "water and Spirit," he really has no life in him, and so cannot enter the kingdom or family of God; whilst Jesus says in this chapter, with all the solemnity used to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." In this way, whether we take this eating and drinking as being simply by faith, as He really said, or whether we take Him to refer to the sacred rite of the Supper, as He certainly did not, His words imply, that in the case of all baptised in infancy, there could not have been conveyed the new birth, else it could not have been said that there could be no life in those who had not yet fed on the very flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. The baptised infant, according to the doctrine which we condemn, is to be regarded as born again or from above, and therefore as now having true life in it, but from the time of this supposed new life till the child was sufficiently able so to eat and so to drink by faith, as Jesus instructs us, he could have no life in him; implying a clear contradiction in the very terms, and at the same time implying two things:-

First, That no new birth was due to baptism according to Christ; and

Second, That also, according to Him, this eating and drinking by faith in Himself, was identical with the very birth of water and Spirit spoken of to Nicodemus; and as an infant could not so eat and drink, no new life or birth could possibly be the result of any such rite or economy as infant baptism at all.

We may here, in connection with this, refer to verses 60-65, as wonderfully condemning all who take the words of either passage, "water" on the one hand, and "flesh and blood" on the other, in a really literal sense, and therefore all who pervert in this way the sacred ordinances of baptism and the Supper of our Lord, by pointing to the mistaken idea that He meant literally the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood: He expressly declaring that, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:" (not even the literal flesh and blood of which He had spoken, and that to the offence of those who were now going away from them): "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life" (verse 63).

Before coming to a close, we feel as if we could not overlook the strong, and what we cannot but regard as the dogmatic, and most erroneous interpretation of the learned and excellent Dean Alford of this greatly controverted doctrine of Jesus Christ. We must quote at considerable length, Vol. I. p. 714: "There can be no doubt, on any honest interpretation of the words, that γεννηθῆναι ἐξ ὕδατος refers to the token or outward sign of baptism,—γ. ἐκ πνεύματος to the thing signified, or inward grace of the Holy Spirit." Here we remark

the second $\dot{\epsilon}\kappa$ is added to the original text, to the injury of the verse, as we have seen, and to the undue support of the Dean's interpretation, as we have shown in treating of the view of Dr. Pusey. "All attempts to get rid of these two plain facts have sprung from doctrinal prejudices, by which the views of expositors have been warped. Such we have in Calvin: 'spiritum, qui nos repurgat, et qui virtute sua in nos diffusa vigorem inspirat coelestis vitæ; 'Grotius: 'spiritum aquæ instar emundantem; ' . . . Tholuck, who holds that not baptism itself, but only its idea, that of cleansing, is referred to. . . ." In the face of such expositors, for whose views there is as much verbal authority as for his own, we cannot but wonder at the spirit which traces all different views from his own as due to nothing short of mere prejudice. "All the better and deeper expositors have recognised the co-existence of the two, water and the Spirit. So, for the most part the Ancients. . . . This, then, being recognised, to what does ύδωρ refer? At that time, two kinds of baptism were known: that of proselytes, by which they were received into Judaism; and that of John, by which, as a preparatory rite, symbolising repentance, the people were made ready for Him who was to baptise them with the Holy Ghost. But both these were significant of one and the same truth; that, namely, of the entire cleansing of the man for the new and Spiritual life on which he was to enter, symbolised by water cleansing the outward person. . . . John himself declared his baptism to be incomplete,—it was only with water; One was coming who should baptise with the Holy Ghost. That declaration of his is the key to the understanding of this verse. Baptism, complete, with water and the Spirit,

is the admission into the kingdom of God. Those who have received the outward sign and the spiritual grace, have entered into that Kingdom. And this entrance was fully ministered to the disciples when the Spirit descended on them on the day of Pentecost. So that, as spoken to Nicodemus, these words referred him to the baptism of John, which probably (see Luke vii. 30) he had slighted. But they were not only spoken to him. The words of our Lord have in them life and meaning for all ages of His Church: and more especially these opening declarations of His ministry. He here unites together the two elements of a complete baptism which were sundered in the words of the Baptist, chapter i. 33,-in which united form He afterwards (Matt. xxviii, 19, 20: Mark xvi. 16) ordained it as a Sacrament of His Church."

We think, in this long quotation, we have given a full view of Alford's interpretation of this most important announcement of the young infallible Teacher to the Pharisaic ruler of Israel. We may reply after this manner:—

1st. Like many others, Alford takes no note of what we have treated as the real and, we might say, the only key to the certain meaning of the words "water and Spirit" contained in verse 5. The words of Christ, "Art thou a master or teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things?" we hold absolutely cannot but imply such ignorance on the part of Nicodemus as gave full demonstration of two things—(1) that he had abundant means of knowing; and (2) that, if he could not learn from anything which he knew or should know at that time, he must have been able to learn from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Now we are certain

that Alford's doctrine of baptismal regeneration, whether true or false, was certainly not announced at that time, nay, as Alford himself acknowledges, was not so much as thought of till the Day of Pentecost and the promised baptism of the Spirit. He being judge then, and false as we hold his doctrine to be, Nicodemus could not possibly have known anything of it; so that, if it was not to be found in the Old Testament, Nicodemus could not find it at all in the only source of instruction, which, as a, or the, teacher of Israel, was within his reach. There this teacher could not find it, because it was not, and is not, there to be found. On the other hand, we must be careful lest we fail to acknowledge the just judgment of Jesus in this censure of the ruler; and this everyone will be guilty of doing, who does not hold that the Jewish Scriptures do contain the doctrine which Jesus was unfolding to him, and that with such clearness as could not be innocently misunderstood. In fact, the doctrine of regeneration, as opposed to baptismal regeneration, being alone what Nicodemus could have thus learned, we have a full proof of the former as the meaning of Jesus, and the latter as destitute of all Divine authority. We may, therefore, repeat, Let all beware of virtually censuring Christ for here censuring Nicodemus, Jesus the Infallible Judge, as well as Divine Redeemer.

2nd. In order to make out his view of "water and Spirit," the learned dean actually unites two perfectly distinct, nay, totally different, baptisms, each in itself complete, into one baptism, absolutely without Scriptural authority, and yet by him declared to be identical with that of the apostolic commission, and ordained by the Great Head of the Church, as in verse 5, baptismal

regeneration, the very gate into the kingdom of heaven. In order to effect his fearful purpose, he, in the first place, ventures to say, "John himself declares his baptism to be incomplete—it was only with water." John declares no such thing. The dean himself says truly the very reverse. He says it was "a preparatory rite, symbolising repentance, . . . making the people ready for Him who was to baptise with the Holy Ghost." What more was needed to make it complete? If it symbolised repentance, and pointed to Him who was about to come as the Messiah, and, as He baptised by His disciples, and preached, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," what could be more suitable or complete than a symbol of repentance for the remission of sins as preparing the way for the coming King? It could only be for a time, and for that time it was perfect and entire, wanting nothing, but intended then to pass away for ever. For this most important but temporary purpose, water as the element, and immersion as the manner, were appointed by God who sent him, and complete as Divine wisdom could make it. The promised baptism of the Spirit was for a totally different purpose, and that which only the Spirit, without one drop of water, could possibly effect. The union, therefore, of the two baptisms of the herald and of the glorified Messiah was impossible, and could not be formed into the one perpetual baptism of the apostolic commission, or any baptism that, as Dr. Alford maintains, could or did purify, far less regenerate a single

3rd. "The baptism of the Holy Spirit," which Christ or God could alone effect, our mistaken commentator has, with many others, completely misunderstood. It is simply amazing to what an extent this has been the case. Dr. Alford adds: "Baptism, complete, with water and the Spirit" (that of John united with that of Christ or of Pentecost) "is the admission into the kingdom of God," or that of verse 5; so that thus "Those who have the outward sign" of the forerunner, "and the spiritual grace" of Pentecost, have entered into the kingdom. And this entrance was fully ministered to the disciples when the Spirit descended on them on the Day of Pentecost. That is to say, no disciple, no apostle of Jesus, no believer in His name, had entered the kingdom of which Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, or to which John or Jesus or the Apostles referred in the course of their ministrations till the Day of Pentecost, or till after Christ was raised from the dead, and glorified and crowned in Heaven, and had sent down the promised Spirit to be an infallible witness of His resurrection, and to give the Apostles "power from on high" to be chosen witnesses of that resurrection, and to preach the Gospel to the whole world. In this way they entered the Kingdom, not when they believed the Gospel or when they received the Messiah and thus became sons of God, as said in John i. 11-13, but only after they had waited long and prayed together for the promised Spirit, not to convert them to God, but to give them power from on high to enlighten and convert the world. That we may illustrate our point the more clearly, we may set forth the two great parts Divinely assigned to the Spirit in the vast work of the redemption of mankind. Jesus having laid the foundation by the grand sacrifice or propitiation of Calvary, the Spirit of all grace goes on to build—First, by the conversion of sinners; and, secondly, by gradu-

ally perfecting saints. Christ Himself clearly sets this forth in John vii. 37-39, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" ("Me," the true Water of Life, the water and Spirit 'of which (chap. iii. 5), a man must be born again' in order to enter the kingdom of God). "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said" (and just as we have been contending) "out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water. But" (says John) "this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." Thus, then, First, The Spirit enlightens and leads the sinner to believe in Christ; Secondly, The believer is baptised by Christ by His Apostles, and as such, promised the baptism or higher work of the Spirit; and thus, Thirdly, all believers, all disciples baptised with water, according to the apostolic commission or before, in fact, all now by faith children of God and subjects of the kingdom, led to expect such a baptism or mighty work of the Spirit, as would carry on the process of sanctification, as would prepare them for the instruction and conversion of sinners, and as, by perpetual in-dwelling and in-working, would make them one with Christ and one with the Father, and so, as Christ declared, give to them the very glory which the Father had given to Himself,-the mysterious and most marvellous glory,—"the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we (are) one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me." The baptism of the Spirit, then, or this grand work of the Spirit is not for unbelieving

sinners at all, but for saints, or sinners saved by faith in Christ alone, and baptised in water, if obedient to the apostolic commission, or those already within the kingdom. All this is just as Jesus declared to all, "I am the Door: by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture." And, if we would find the most certain proof of this, that the Spirit is promised to Christians alone, and not by even possibility to the unbelieving world at all, we may only quote one other text, "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you" (John xiv. 15-17).

4th. We should have long ago strongly urged the fact that Jesus, in this whole passage, never so much as mentions the idea of baptism, but speaks of the new birth, and that birth twice, and that birth alone. It was the only theme of the Old Testament, which Nicodemus could find there, and which He censured Nicodemus for not being familiar with, as being so clearly set forth there, and, in fact, as we have said, as the only subject which it was worthy of Himself to treat and expound at that time and with such an inquirer. We leave this to the careful study and enlightened judgment of every thoughtful Christian.

We have treated of this subject and of passages relating to it as far as one can well do; and now we would conclude by expressing our wonder at the fact that it should be so long and so strongly held that Christ could possibly have said what they suppose Him to have said, and not to have said also what all reason and all Scripture may be seen fully to demonstrate that He actually did say, namely, that regeneration was absolutely necessary in order to any one entering or seeing or being in the kingdom of God. At the outset we might have fully considered the question, Is water baptism thus necessary to such entrance? or, Does not the fact that the birth of water and the Spirit is here declared to be so absolutely necessary, not fully prove that water baptism cannot possibly have been intended? This question of course might be answered, as we have virtually done, by an appeal to the entire scope of Scripture. In other words, Does the New Testament really make baptism in water essential to salvation? However, another question may be asked, Does this very portion of Scripture not itself give a certain sound as to the point in dispute? Do not the terms employed clearly indicate the whole, the certain truth? What does Jesus mean by the kingdom? Is it on earth or in heaven? Is it the former? Is it, as many would maintain, any Church on earth requiring water baptism as a condition of membership, Romish or Protestant, Baptist or Pædobaptist? Can no one enter such, unless born of the Spirit as certainly as baptised? No Protestant will say so, or suppose that none can enter without the baptism of the Spirit. No Romanist can say that the Church of Rome is inacceptable to any but the born anew. He may believe that all baptised infants cannot but enter. But what of adults? Can no baptised infidels enter? How many enter all Churches, never changed in life, however baptised in water? Indeed no Church on earth can be found into which the bad as

well as the good can find no entrance. Christ Himself leaves us without a doubt as to this; and tells us of the tares which none can keep from being mixed and from growing with the wheat. If we identify then the kingdom spoken of with the Church or any Church, then Jesus could not refer to such, and yet say that He meant the rite of baptism, because only the born anew could really enter. Let us suppose the real kingdom on earth and in heaven; and we shall find the words true, that only the twice born can enter there. But can no one so enter without water baptism? Protestants cannot, will not say so. The Scriptures nowhere say so. No reason says so. Enlightened reason would reject the God as no God, who was fully believed to say so. The Bible itself could not withstand the criticism which really detected such doctrine within its pages. Yes, such a doctrine sadly held by millions, would doom any such book to everlasting condemnation, in which it was certainly found. Every Church which holds, and which continues to hold it, is assuredly doomed to final destruction. It is far more than a lamentation that such a doctrine has ever entered the Christian Church, that it has been re-entering a portion of the Reformed Church, and that all enlightened Christians should not, with all their heart, condemn and abhor it, and separate from every community guilty of retaining it in its creed, or in any way guilty of commending it to the Church or the world.





